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DECEMBER 10, 2009
ISSUE 837

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CJSR PROGRAM GUIDE NOV09

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
6am	BBC World Service	BBC World Service	BBC World Service	BBC World Service	BBC World Service	OPEN	GET YOUR JAMMES ON - Mark (JM)	6am
7	22&50 Songs Melaine	MAKIN' MOOPEE - Chad and Colin	CLOCKWORK ORANGE JUICE - Moose Brothers	Full English Breakfast - Peter	Great Face for Radio - Kevin	The Toast Marketing Board or Senior Blues		7
8								8
9	Open	Put 'n D for Dangle - Fiona	Open Start	Tonal Music w. Peter	Atkinson - Phoenix (N)	Musica Nova - Robin (L)	Jazzology - Steve (L)	9
10								10
11	Lady Zz Top - Chance and Julie	Fourte Tout with Chantal	THE PSD FACTORY - Buster Friendly	Sound of My Own Voice - D. Jeffery Buchanan	Heavy Metal Lunchbox - Sam and Phil (M)	ALTERNATIVE RADIO Progressive Lectures	Radio Kachmandu - Brunch in Nepal	11
noon				Stranded w. Matt		RESISTANCE - Dave (P)	Rages and Rhythms - Janine and Inman	
1	Phil-In with Phil	K8 Em All - Kathy K	Mind Compression - Gabby	Eclectic Company - Janine, Vicki, Thomas	Newsroom		Voice of Eritrea	1
2		Viking Music			Hamster Tales w. Tammy	Training Spaces	Open slot!	2
3	Ransom Radio - Craig and Clint	Breakfast in Rockland - Devin	20th Century Charles Dickens Experience - Smiley Jay or Field	68 Comeback Special - Craig and Tom		25 to Life with Andy	The Cante Show	3
4					Event Calendar Roundup w. James	CATCH THE BEAT - Cam (EL/NH)	San Fronteras (SP)	4
5	DEMOCRACY NOW! Alternative News	TERRA INFORMA! Local Environmental News	Groundline: National News programming	ALERT	MOVING RADIO Fan & Video Alternatives with Groundline			5
530		COUNTERCOW Countersong Media Unit	RISE UP! RADIO FREE EDMONTON! Alternative Politics	Moccasin Telegraph Aboriginal Culture Show	ADAMANT EVE Feminist Radio			530
6 pm	BORROWED TUNES - Joel	Catch the Wave	THE TROBROOKS: The All-World Africa News Service	GATHERING Round The Round	Skeptically Speaking	BPM	Polskie Radio	6 pm
7	Borscht in Space - Angels	Frustration Rock - Mike	CALLING ALL BLUES Grant Stovel and Graham Guest	PRAIRIE PICKIN' - Doug & Rob (BG)				7
730					SOUNDS UKRAINIAN Lada (U)	ELEKTRIK SEX TELEFON - Eddie Lunchpail (E)		730
8		Aural Gault - Emmett and Quinto		ASKO PHANTOM PYRAMID - Minister Faust & Bongblami (A)		HOUSE UNDERGROUND FM - DJ JIU (DB/EL)	Arragide Bialia	8
9	Bass Culture	Necrotechs Units - The Shadow	The Sounds of Folkways - Farris		The Caribbean Connection		Ethiopian Biserat	9
10	Get Some West w. Babe Lloyd	Punk Fil-In with Mike B	THE SHOE BOX - Brian & Pete	DEPROGRAM - Norm alternating with Z RADIO - Umar		Structural Sound - Alex	Hip Hop Spread on Planet Bread w. Luca	10
11	Between Yesterday and Tomorrow - Alanna		THE BROTH DANCERS' GUIDE TO FINE MUSIC - Alanna (BG)		Melancholy Cacophony w. Keegan	The Missing Link with Touch and Neta	Dream Machine	11
midnight		Finding the Rhythms - Mike B	KAMIKAZE COMEDY Lars & Powerman (C)	LIQUID CHATTER - The Miles	Altered States			midnight
1	Darkness of my Soul					URBAN HANG SUITE Arto Mavrick (NH)	Reflections - Phillip	1
130		Open	Electroprotapes - DJ Kuch(EL)	Open	Open			130
2								2
3							BBC World Service NEW SHOW TBA	3
4		BBC World Service NEW SHOW TBA		BBC World Service NEW SHOW TBA		EVIL PETTING ZOO -		4
5								5

LEGEND all programs are ECLECTIC unless otherwise noted • Shared - News Programming • Shared - Shared show, with alternating hosts • A - African • AM - Amharic Language • B - Blues • BG - Bluegrass • C - Comedy • CL - Classical • CO - Country • CR - Classic Rock (CJSR style) • DB - Drum & Bass • DI - Electro-Industrial • EL - Electronic • EX - Experimental • FI - French Language • G - Garage Rock • HI - Hip Hop/Urban • IN - Indo Pakistani • J - Jazz • JM - Jam Bands • L - Local Music • M - Metal • N - Native • NE - Nepalese • NM - New Music • P - Punk • PI - Phone In • PO - Polish Language • PR - Prog Rock • R - Roots • RG - Ragga • SP - Spanish Language • TI - Tigrinya Language • U - Ukrainian • WS - World Beat

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CHEVROLET

“IN PAST YEARS, THERE WAS NEVER A PROBLEM. WE WOULD SEND OUT E-MAILS, AND IT WAS DONE. LAST YEAR, WE COULDN'T DO IT.”

NEWS FEATURE • CHARITY WOES • BY GWYNETH DUNFORD 118 words

Wallets Of The Wealthy Slower To Open In 2009

BIG TICKET GALAS FACE A HARDER SELL AS RECESSION'S IMPACT LINGERS

As the sound of Salvation Army kettles fill city sidewalks, Edmonton charities are hosting lavish fundraisers to try to cash in on holiday generosity. However, as holiday revellers direct their income elsewhere, it becomes increasingly daunting for charity organizers to sell tickets to their events.

A local Doctors Without Borders chapter is struggling to sell out its ritzy New Year's Eve gala. While raising money for its humanitarian programs, this organization is seeing a backlash from frugal Edmontonians unwilling to pay \$140 for a ticket to the event. With a negligible advertising budget, organizer and DJ Richard Tomski was left to promote his event simply by word of mouth. While touting the highlights of the event, Tomski's anxiety is palpable, even over the phone.

"In the past years before, there was never a problem," said Tomski. "We would send out e-mails and it was done, it was sold out in a few weeks. Last year, we couldn't do it."

The Edmonton International New Year's Eve Gala is one of the city's most lavish events, featuring a poker tournament, a four-course meal and entertainment from comedian Derek Edwards. Tomski says that party-goers are not in the mood to celebrate and would rather coo at home than shell out for ritzy parties.

"There are so many bad, negative economic stories on TV and in newspapers... very bad predictions about what will happen next year," says Tomski. "They read this and they think, 'It is better to keep our money in our pockets.'"

As some become more cautious with their disposable income, a Las Vegas-style casino seems a bit ostentatious. Facing reduced work hours himself, Tomski doubts that those in the same situation will feel like celebrating this New Year's.

A handful of up-market charity galas over the holiday season make organizations compete for donations. Harried organizers are so pre-occupied that they do not recognize the competition that they face from similar charity events.

"I will be honest, I didn't know that Doctors Without Borders did a gala ever," admits Caroline Warren, the chair of a Faceoff with Cystic

Fibrosis.

A fundraiser for the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Faceoff with Cystic Fibrosis — known originally as the 65 Roses Sportsclub Dinner — will be hosted by Edmonton Oilers captain, Ethan Moreau, on Jan. 23. With ticket packages to the banquet starting at \$125, Warren reduced the event's seating capacity to 140 to ensure a sell-out. After 13 years of work with the Foundation, Warren did not want to watch the event falter, as it did last year. These changes, Warren explains, allow her to continue to plan the event without the risk of financial shortfall.

The dinner has been a substantial fundraiser for the foundation, raising more than \$400,000 since it began in 1985.

Making less money from the gala means less money for CF research, says Warren.

"We create a budget for each fiscal year, and that is the commitment that we make to the national office to raise those funds. Based on that, they decide, these are the research projects that we can sponsor. If we fall short, we have to draw money from elsewhere in our chapter. We will create another fundraiser to make it happen. We are a small chapter but we have sometimes run (more than) 40 fundraisers a year. We are a very determined bunch."

"If we don't raise the money a research project might get cancelled, and that project might be the one that finds the cure. The stakes are pretty high."

Warren sympathizes with Tomski, noting that her organization's roster of events prevents them from relying solely on the income generated by one fundraiser.

"I think if we had one major event, we would be in some hot water too," Warren explains. "How do you appeal to massive amounts of people with one event? The tough thing that we have done by diversifying is that it takes a tremendous amount of volunteer hours to put on a lot of different events."

Susan Wong Armstrong, the organizer of the Alberta Cancer Foundation's Snowball, was also in want of volunteers. While the Nov. 19 charity cocktail party netted \$5,000, it was Wong Armstrong who single-handedly coordinated the gala.

"I had a volunteer step up, (but) then her hours got cut at work and she had to focus on



Hard Sell | Doctors Without Borders gala organizer Richard Tomski has found his event is a tougher sell in 2009. PHOTO BY MEREL SMITH/LANTANA/REUTERS/PHOTOFEST

getting a full-time job," says Wong Armstrong. "You can't blame her for that. There was a situation, and people are dealing with different things."

Like Faceoff with Cystic Fibrosis, the Snowball saw a slip in sponsorship and corporate donations this year. To compensate, they downsized their venue. Though past years drew 200 to 300 people, this year's festivities drew 130.

While relying heavily on the previous year's ticket-buyers to fill the Snowball, Wong Armstrong wanted to attract a new contingent to the event. Combating the image of a "stuffy, sit-down dinner," Wong Armstrong hoped to woo affluent, young audiences to ensure ticket sales.

"We have a little bit reinvented ourselves with the live band aspect," says Wong Armstrong. "We booked the Frolics (who are) kind of a hipper, surf-punk kind of band that appeal a bit more to a younger audience."

As charity organizers struggle to adapt their fundraisers, they must still contend with some unpredictable variables. Regardless of any economic indicators, it is still useless to predict Edmonton's fickle audiences.

"Edmonton in general is a very late population in terms of buying tickets," explains Wong Armstrong. "So you just never know. You cross your fingers, you promote and talk about it as much as you can, but you just never know."

CHARITY EVENT • FREE PHOTOS • BY ANDREW PAUL 120 words

Photogs Give Struggling Folks Reason To Smile

LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHERS OFFER FREE PORTRAITS FOR CITY'S UNDERPRIVILEGED

Edmonton's underprivileged will have something to smile about this weekend as they say "cheese" for free holiday portraits being provided by local photographers.

"We're taking pictures for under privileged

families, single moms, homeless people, underprivileged youth, seniors, anyone who falls under those categories," says Lillian Patz, a photographer involved with Help-Portrait, a global collective of photographers organizing the event in cities around the world.

This is the second year Help-Portrait has set up shop in Edmonton, and due to overwhelming attendance last year the event has expanded

from a single location to four across the city.

On Dec. 12 participants will have their hair and make up done by volunteers before stepping in front of the lens to have their photo taken and printed free of charge.

"It's free of cost for them, and maybe they can send it out to family and friends at Christmas or just to have a chance to make them feel beautiful for a day," Patz says.

Anyone interested in taking part can visit any of Help-Portrait's four locations between 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

The Help-Portrait locations are: 10233 Jasper Ave. (Paramount Theatre); 9516 114th Ave. (Norwood Child and Family Centre); #201 10575-115th St. (3 Ten Photography); 10604-172nd St. (Anderson Career Training Institute).

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MY TOWN SCOTTLINGLY
EVEN REACTIONARY NEWS-
PAPER COLUMNISTS WOULD
ENJOY THE CLUB'S VIBE

Maybe it's too early to start making New Year's resolutions, but I already have a couple in mind. First, I'm going to stop reading anything with Lorne Gunter's byline. The *Journal/National Post's* resident right-wing ideologue has been a source of amusement and simmering dismay for me in the past, whether he's denouncing the homo/Muslim/environmentalist agenda to overthrow the White Male's hard-earned grip on most of the world's wealth, or touting the virtues of free market capitalism as a righteous mercantile that will eventually get around to solving all the catastrophic problems it has been causing for the past century.

This week, Gunter was all over the alleged controversy issuing from the

thousand some-odd e-mails stolen from the Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia that supposedly show scientists there have been juking the numbers to make global warming look worse than it actually is. Adding his own benighted bleat to the chorus of right-wing shouters who claimed this revelation had stricken a fatal blow to the legitimacy of climate change science, Gunter disingenuously trotted out the same distortions about the contents of the e-mails that had already been through one cycle of media sensationalism and come out more or less fully debunked. Actually there's another d-word I can think of for Gunter's grasping-at-straws selectivity in examining the pertinent facts, except that it ends with "bag." If he has a hard time accepting our shared role in climate change, maybe he could at least see the sense in reducing our flagrant waste of fossil fuels and the pollution they generate. But I guess that would mean admitting defeat to the homo-Islamo-tree-huggers.

Who isn't sick of allegedly reputable pundits cherry-picking reality for the bits that comport best with the things they already believe and ped-

dling these thinly predicated opinions as reality in their high profile public fora, as though there aren't already human beings suffering from the global ills they have the blithe privilege to refute? Who isn't fed up with quasi-experts in cushy editorial page sinecures and overcompensated government perches whose only suggestions for the betterment of humankind are to cut taxes, ban gay marriage and keep everything else exactly the same?

My second New Year's resolution involves spending more time at the Yardbird Suite, the epicentre of jazz in Edmonton for better than 50 years and the home *inf* about half of my most cherished musical memories. That the Yardbird hasn't caught on widely as a cool place is simple evidence of how cool it is — it's trendy-proof, perhaps by virtue of the occasionally esoteric music that is sometimes heard there and partially because of jazz nerds like myself who patronize said esoteric music and go into raptures about seeing non-household-name performers like Steve Lacy, David Murray and the JCP Orchestra in such intimate quarters. What's even cooler is that the Yardbird relies on a dedicated

volunteer force to keep fine jazz — and the stimulating atmosphere that goes with it — accessible to the not-always-grateful residents of this particular Northern Waste.

The first time I shouted involuntary in response to music was at the Yardbird Suite. I was sitting there sipping an affordably priced bottle of imported beer, watching the Dewey Redman Quartet when something in the music got under my skin and transported me directly into the moment the music was *being* created. The combined talents on stage imparted a palpable energy as they raged through some up-tempo post-bop charger and it was all my overwhelmed senses could do to keep up, until a yelp that originated somewhere around my kegel muscles broke loose and found its way, unbidden, out *of* my throat just as Redman and powerhouse drummer Leon Parker traded their last set of fours. No jazz recording I'd ever heard could have prepared me for this. And with that unseasonably involuntary grunt — though I was hardly the only one making these noises — a world of wordless, profound affect opened up to me. Since then, the Yardbird has been the place to most

consistently rediscover that thrill, whether with international touring artists or the fine crop of local players the Suite has nurtured.

The easiest way to find this out for yourself is at the Yardbird's cheap and cozy Tuesday night jams where, for \$5 you get a sample of some top flight local outfit doing their own thing before they host a procession of aspiring, veteran and closet jazzers. Last week it was the surprising and highly accomplished music of the Parkers, a quartet featuring saxist/vocalist Karen Parkica and trumpeter Bob Tildesley that's partly dedicated to exploring the songbook of NY jazz freak William Parker. A buttery misadventure of microwave popcorn has supplanted the clouds of tobacco smoke that were once standard ambience of any jazz club worth its salt, but the warm, interior twinkling with candlelight hasn't lost any of its any of its chiaroscuro charm and the beer is still affordably priced. The Yardbird Suite is about to wrap for the season prepare for the next series of shows in 2010, at which time I hope everyone gives the place a shot and walks out with their own transcendent, transformative musical experience to cherish. Even Lorne Gunter.

info2
know

Making your charitable donations work harder

Alberta's charitable tax credit benefits taxpayers and the charities you support.

Alberta's tax credit on annual charitable donations over \$200 is now 21 per cent — one of the highest tax credits in Canada. When added to the federal tax credit of 29 per cent, Albertans receive a 50 per cent non-refundable tax credit on those donations. The first \$200 in charitable donations continues to receive an Alberta tax credit of 10 per cent and a federal tax credit of 15 per cent. This tax credit is not a refund.

The following example illustrates how the Alberta charitable tax credit combines with the federal tax credit to provide the optimum benefit to Alberta taxpayers and the charities you support.

Example

Total Annual Donations	Alberta Tax Credit	Federal Tax Credit	Total Tax Credit
\$500.00	\$83.00	\$117.00	\$200.00
\$1000.00	\$188.00	\$262.00	\$450.00

For complete information on how Alberta's charitable tax credit benefits both taxpayers and the registered charities* that rely on donor support, visit www.communityspintprogram.ca or call toll-free 310-0000, then dial 780-644-8604.

*Must be registered with Canada Revenue Agency.

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— ENVIRONMENT MINISTER ROB RENNER ON HIS TRIP TO
 THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE,
 AS QUOTED BY THE EDMONTON JOURNAL

IF INDY RACE IS A LEMON IN 2010, CITY MUST PULL THE PLUG

Like it or not, Edmonton will host another year of the Edmonton Indy, where fast cars go round and round in circles, burning millions of gallons of fuel and millions of taxpayer dollars.

Is it worth it? Should the beleaguered Edmonton taxpayer be on the hook for millions in losses incurred in this annual fix for speed junkies?

In some ways, the Edmonton Indy has been a success. Crowds have, for the most part, been excellent. Car racing enthusiasts from across Western Canada find their way to Edmonton, the closest pit stop on the Indy Racing League (IRL) circuit, pumping millions of dollars into the local economy; one report the city received estimated the event brought in \$90 million; but you should always take these kinds of numbers with a teaspoon of salt. The event is televised around the world, no doubt giving Edmonton much needed exposure. (But please don't say it "puts Edmonton on the map." We've been on the map for a couple of hundred years.)

So the Edmonton Indy is a success except where it really counts, the bottom line. The race has run up a deficit of \$9.2 million over the past two years, a deficit covered by the taxpayers of Edmonton, whether they're car race fans or not.

The city decided this week to continue sponsorship of the race for another year, predominantly because of the cost of breaking the contract with IRL would be prohibitive. City councillors rightly believe a deal is a deal, and breaking a contract would reflect badly on the city.

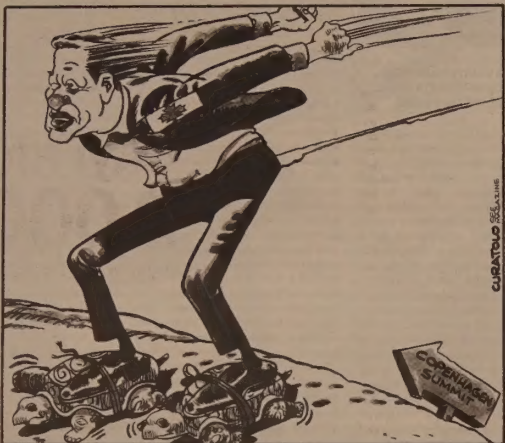
But what of the Indy race after next year,

when the contract expires? The race clearly has a constituency, and in general anything that brings excitement, exposure and tourist dollars to a city is a good thing. Even if your idea of car racing is going 100 km/h on the Whitemud, you have to agree that having the event here has more positives than negatives.

But the deficit is very substantial. Mayor Stephen Mandel has promised to put a full court press, to mix sports metaphors, on the city's business community to come through with sponsorship dollars. Mandel, in fact, seems to have taken personal ownership of making the event a success, promising to become directly involved with pitching the event to Edmonton's business community. Because of the secretive nature of the IRL financial situation — financial information was given to city council behind closed doors — we have no way of knowing if the city's business community, which benefits more from the race than any single person, is stepping up to the plate. Good for Mandel for promising to roll up his sleeves to save the event.

Northlands, which runs the event, is promising to cut costs even further, so there is hope that the Indy race can make a go of it in Edmonton.

So 2010 will be a make-or-buy year for the Edmonton Indy. If Northlands can reduce the deficit to something workable, perhaps in the million-dollar range, then the Edmonton Indy may be considered money well spent. But another year of losses in the \$2-\$3 million range as we've seen in the past should be a sign that the Edmonton Indy is a lemon ready for the scrap heap.



COMMENTARY • POLITICAL PAY • BY A WORD

Nice Work If You Can Get It



OUTSIDE POLITICS MAURICE TOUGAS
**MEMBERSHIP IN PRIVATE
 TORY MEETING CLUB HAS ITS
 PRIVILEGES**

When you're a PC MLA in Alberta, life is good.

In fact, it's ALL good. Not only do you spend your days in the legislature silently sitting on your can, dozing quietly if you like (this is preferred, being that you're much less likely to get into trouble by voicing an opinion), you get paid bags of dough to do it. Even though their salaries were "frozen" this year, government MLAs are making more money than ever before.

The latest example of the Tories' generous nature, at least when it comes to themselves, came last week with the revelation that Conservative backbenchers and cabinet ministers are getting extra pay to sit in on secret meetings.

Tories MLAs sit in on policy committees that advise the government on various government matters. Nothing wrong with committees; they get a lot of work done, vetting bills, listening to public concerns, etc. Members of all parties sit on different standing committees, which is as close to democracy as we have in this province.

But there are two intriguing changes with the other committees, set up by that ol' fiscal conservative, Fast Eddie Stelmach. The committees are only for Tories — it's a restricted club. If that's not bad enough, the meetings are held in secret. No minutes are available, no attendance lists published, no agendas made public. All but two of 70 Tory MLAs sit in on these flagrantly antidemocratic meetings, and they benefit greatly from them. The average Tory cabinet blob gets an additional \$12,000 a year for sitting in on these secret meetings. And it gets better, or worse, depending on where you stand. If you're one of the barely sentient beings who is given the right to chair one of these meetings, your already generous pay packet is increased by \$30,000. Cabinet ministers, who are already at the top of the pay scale, get an ad-

ditional \$35,460 for the meetings. This modest stipend brings a cabinet minister's salary up to \$177,510. Oh, and don't forget that for cabinet ministers and all MLAs, one-third of their salary is tax free.

Stelmach's so-called MLA wage freeze instituted earlier this year is now proven to be a flat out lie — MLAs, at least of the Tory variety, are making more than ever before. Thanks to Stelmach's sleight of hand, even the most undistinguished Tory MLA, and that would be 80 per cent of them, will take home well into a six-figure salary.

Before Fast Eddie's government changed the system, the remuneration paid to Tory MLAs who sat on the committees came to \$140,000 a year. Today, it's \$1.4 million. Yep, in these trying times, with the Tories ordering health and education to squeeze every last kopek out of their budgets, Tories are spending an additional \$1,260,000 on themselves to attend meetings. Oh, and these increases were achieved through and over in council, which conveniently bypasses debate in the legislature.

Well, at least we should know if we're getting our \$1.4 million worth of

TOUGAS cont'd on p. 9

BY THE NUMBERS • MLA SALARIES

PAYCHECK BREAKDOWN FOR YOUR MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE
 SOURCE: GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

MLA BASE SALARY \$52,092

NON-TAXABLE SALARY \$26,046

ANNUAL RRSP CONTRIBUTION \$10,000

BENEFITS \$6,000 - \$8,000

EXTRA SALARY FOR MINISTERS \$63,912

EXTRA SALARY FOR PREMIER \$81,312



TOUGAS (cont'd from p. 8)

out of these meetings.

So how long are the meetings?

We don't know.

So how often are they held?

We don't know.

What is discussed?

None of yer damn business.

In times like this, when the Tories are found to be up to their elbows in the government cookie jar, most Tory MLAs lay low and hope the whole thing blows over, which it most assuredly will. But not Thomas Lukaszuk, the only MLA from Castle Downs, who never misses a chance to talk even if he has nothing to say. Tommy Boy defended the extra pay in an *Edmonton Journal* article, saying of the meetings: "A minister cannot bring anything to caucus unless it has the approval of the cabinet policy committee. It brings balance to a minister's ability to make regulation."


What a steaming pile. This is the same work that all previous Tory MLAs have done, except now they get paid handsomely for it. And considering the wretchedness of some of the bills brought forward by Stelmach's Keystone Cabinet, clearly the committees aren't doing much of a job. (For the record, according to official government accounting, including salary, fees and benefits, and the standard \$10,000 contribution to his RRSP that all MLAs receive, Lukaszuk pulled down a cool \$150,565 in 2008-09.)

Face it, Lukaszuk and the rest of the barnacles on the ship of state who call themselves Tory MLAs are dipping into the public purse with impunity. This is indefensible. In supposedly difficult times, you've given yourselves substantial pay hikes on top of your already comfortable MLA salaries to do your jobs. With thinking like this, you guys are candidates for jobs at Goldman Sachs.

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Beware — There Could Be BPA In Your Dildo

GET PICKY ABOUT YOUR PLASTIC PLEASURE PIECES — CHEAP THRILLS CAN HAVE NASTY SIDE EFFECTS

If you buy an adult novelty to spice up your sex life, you'd expect a red face to be the most serious side effect of your purchase — but you could be mistaken.

Lower-end adult novelty items are often made of products that contain BPA and phthalates, ingredi-

Kerber began her career as a sex educator before shifting gears into the world of adult toy parties. It was as a party hostess that she started to learn more about what actually goes into the making of adult toys. At the start of her career, selling sex toys with another company, she noticed that not all the toys stayed clean, and some were very flimsy. "I just started doing my own research," Kerber says, "and started to understand there was big difference between

A 2006 SURVEY CONDUCTED IN THE NETHERLANDS THAT TESTED EIGHT DIFFERENT SEX TOYS FOUND THAT SEVEN OF THEM CONTAINED PHTHALATES.

ents that have been banned in other products like food packaging and children's toys.

Phthalates are also one of a number of "specific environmental contaminants" listed on the Canadian Cancer Society's website, which states that the group is "concerned about the long-term health effects where exposure to high levels [of phthalates] may occur."

The amount of phthalates found in adult toys varies, but a 2006 study commissioned by Greenpeace Netherlands tested eight different sex toys, and found that seven of them contained phthalates "in concentrations varying from 24 to 51 per cent."

Brenda Kerber, the owner and operator of The Traveling Tickle Trunk on Whyte Avenue, hasn't completely made up her mind about phthalates yet, but she does recognize them as a concern — especially for women, on account of the absorbent tissue in the vagina.

what products are made of."

And phthalates aren't the only thing to be wary of when buying adult toys.

According to Stacy Stiles, national manager for the home party business Sensual Secrets, there are lots of hidden dangers toy users might not be aware of, including latex allergies, chemical reactions, and proper toy cleaning. "We talk about toy cleaners in our presentations, before the toys — so that when we get to the toys we can go, 'OK, remember this toy cleaner? This is how you use it,' and then we'll demonstrate

"Even before I'll sell someone a lube," Stiles continues, "I make them put it on their fingers and rub it, because if they get a white frothiness, it doesn't work with their pH balance. I generally say if it does something funky on the outside, it's going to do something funky on the inside. Some of them cause yeast infections. If you're a person who's prone to yeast infections, you want to make sure



Heads up | Brenda Kerber, owner of the traveling Tickle Trunk, shows off her phthalate-free sex toys. PHOTO BY AN JACKSON/EPIC PHOTOGRAPHY

there's no sugar, no glycerine in it."

And as Kerber says, it's important to inform yourself as to what you're getting, and choose your products

carefully.

"Be careful, because a lot of places just know the right words," she says. "If it says '100 per cent silicone,'

that's a good thing... you know what that is. 'Jelly rubber' is not a technical term. That could be anything."

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Panel 8.

**YOUR BEER
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Panel 11.

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CHINESE COMFORT FOOD IDEAL FOR NEW YEAR'S REPAST

MIDNIGHT SUN RESTAURANT
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Every time I set foot in a Chinese restaurant, I'm auditioning it for the coveted designation of the Place I Will Order From on New Year's Day. The first day of January can be existentially and physiologically fraught, in my experience, so it's good to have a stack of DVDs, a two-litre bottle of Italian cola and the hangover pharmacopeia that is \$40 worth of Chinese food.

I'm not pushover, mind you. I know what I like and I won't settle for supermarket or buffet Chinese. I often feel reassured when I find a walk into the likes of Midnight Sun, a place largely bereft of esthetic charm and frills. Experience has inculcated in me the conviction that the less the proprietors care about making the dining room comfortable, the more they care about the quality of the food. In that sense, Midnight Sun was off to a running start. Though clean and well appointed with a corner panorama of blizzard-afflicted 124th Street, it was freezing in there. Half the diners were lone males, hunched in their coats over a free weekly and a bowl of noodles while the so-called EZ Rock bumbled cloying pop Christmas ditties in the background. An unrelenting stream of taker-overs dropped the temperature a few degrees with each entrance and exit. The walls were lined with generic Oriental art and faux-foliage — the real thing wouldn't have stood a chance in that climate. A pleasant woman in a turtle-neck and pastel sweater ran the dining room and

packaged all the to-go parcels.

The menu offered both Chinese and Vietnamese but, having fallen hopelessly in love with the beef noodle soup at Thái Bình, I save all my Vietnamese love for our weekly brunch rendezvous. Tonight we would dine on soup, satay beef, almond soo gai and mixed vegetables in black bean sauce. With rice

Once our order was in, time seemed to slow down. This gave us lots of opportunity to dwell on the antique paper place mats entitled "Know Canada" with 30 some-odd

More than a spicy snap, the soup had a rich, roasted flavour that made each bite satisfying.

When I say we ordered the almond soo gai (\$10.75), I mean that we blindly ordered a chicken dish because it claimed to include crushed almonds. What we got was two chicken breasts puffed up with thick batter and deep frying chopped in big chunks and lavished with a syrupy sauce. Neither my co-dinner nor I are that big on battered, deep-fried things, but we were glad to discover immured in the thick coating there

THE TAB: \$40 FOR TWO, WITH LEFTOVERS
THE GIST: MY CHINESE TAKE-OUT PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED
TRY THE: SATAY BEEF
AVOID: ALMOND SOO GAI

facts about our home and native land dotted across a map showing all the provinces and time zones. Mt. Logan, Canada's highest - 19,850 ft. These babies had languished on a shelf somewhere so long that the measurements were only in imperial units.

Our server persuaded us to sample both the hot and sour soup (\$4.95 small) and the wonton soup (\$3.95 small), and I have to admit to being curious about what constituted the five-cent difference. Both servings were big enough to give us each a good sample, and the wonton was pretty standard. The hot and sour soup – a key element of any New Year's recuperation regimen – gave us our first inkling that Midnight Sun had something up its sleeve. The dark, viscous broth, dusted with white pepper, teemed with shredded carrots and fungus, barbecued pork, egg, peas and who knows what else.

was some nicely cooked breast meat.

The satay beef (\$10.50) and mixed veggies (\$8.50) lived up to the expectations set by the superb hot and sour soup. The former, tossed with broccoli, carrots, peppers and onions, was expertly spiced so as not obscure the complexity of the flavours, and the generous heap of beef strips was unbelievably tender. The veggies – bok choy, carrot, peppers and onions – were shellacked with salty blast of bean sauce and a hint of chili paste and wokked to soft-crunty perfection. I make a habit of ordering more Chinese food than I can eat at a sitting and visions of leftovers were already dancing in my head.

More than that, a presentiment of 2010's first day spent on the couch with a blanket, *Once Upon a Time in the West* and a big bag of take-out from *Midnight Sun*. The friendly woman who runs the place said they're also open on Christmas Day.

ALBERTA RECORDING CHRISTMAS PARTY BRICK BAR & GRILL, 10030 107 ST. DEC. 10 4-7 p.m.
THE ART SOCIETY OF STRATHCONA COUNTY: GENERAL MEETINGS A.J. OTTEWILL ARTS CENTRE, 590 BROOKWOOD BLVD. SHERWOOD PARK Students and prospective members welcome every second Tues. of each month. Doors at 7 p.m.
ART MARKET CARROT COUNTRY ARTS COFFEE HOUSE, 9351-118 AVE. Artists and artisans sharing unique gifts with local patrons. Every Sat. from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info: www.heartlandart.com

CARROT VISUAL ARTISTS COLLECTIVE CARROT
COMMUNITY YOUTH COFFEE HOUSE, 9251-103 AVE. For visual artists. Second Wednesday of every month, 7 a.m.
CHRISTMAS GALA SPRUCE GROVE ART GALLERY. 35-5 AVE. SPRUCE GROVE TO DEC. 23 Show and sale. Info: 763-0564.
A CHRISTMAS PAST RUTHERFORD HOUSE, 1157 LAS KATHEWIAN DRIVE, 1 OF 4 JUMPUS DEC. 8 Seasonal music, cookie baking, and craft making, 12 p.m.
CHRISTMAS SHOW AND SALE EIFFEL GALLERY, STRATHGORDA SENIORS CENTRE, JOZEL UNIVERSITY AVE. TO DEC. 23 Info: 314-5801
O.L.V. MUMMY SHOW FOODS, 1054-42 AVE. DEC. 10 Great Macaroni design, students present art show and sale. Info: 468-1010

ETS CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TOURS VARIOUS LOCATIONS.
DEC. 13-19 ETS takes a trip down Candy Cane Lane. Info:
420-1757

FARMER'S MARKET ALBERTA AVENUE HALL 9278-108 AVE.
Every Thru. prior to 2 p.m.

FESTIVE VEGAN & VEGETARIAN POTLUCK RIVERDALE
COMMUNITY HALL, 9231 100 AVE. DEC. 13 3:30 p.m. info:

FREE FAMILY ART NIGHT'S MONA HUGGERTY CENTRE, 9704-111 AVE. For Parents and children up to 12. Every Thu 6.30 p.m. info: 474-7611

THE HANDMADE MAFRA ORANGE HALL, 10325-84 AVE. DEC 6 A local monthly craft bazaar. 10 a.m.

THE HANDMADE MAFRA SOUTH LOUNGE, 10401 HWY7E AVE. DEC 10 A local monthly craft bazaar. 10 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY HYDEAWAY ALL AGES ART SPACE, 10209 100 AVE. DEC 10 A multi arts celebration. 5 p.m. info: www.thehydeaway.org.

MARK IT! ALBERTA AVIATION MUSEUM, 15410 KINGSWAY

AVE. DEC 11-13 Canadian artisan craft sale. Info: www.makelocalmeetslocal.com
 SPORTSWORLD BIRTHDAY WEEKEND SPORTSWORLD
 1370-104 ST. DEC 11-13 Roller skating disco party. Info: www.sportsworld.ca
 SPORTSWORLD
 TAROT CARD READINGS THE HAT, 10251 JASPER AVE. DEC
 9-11 p.m. every Wednesday
 WHISTLER'S CIRCLE CARBON COMMUNITY ARTS COFFEE
 HOUSE, 1075-75 AVE. Writing workshop every Tue of month
 7 p.m.
 TOWN HALL ON HUNGER IN ALBERTA RIVERBEND
 PUBLIC LIBRARY, 460 RIVERBEND SQUARE DEC. 10 6:30 p.m.
 Info: 421-4872

LEARNING
ARGENTINE TANGO CLASSES WITH CRISTINA & VICENTE ORANGE HALL, 10335-84 AVE. Beginners, intermediate/advance. Mondays at 7:30 p.m. info: 905-3505/vamtangot@yahoo.ca
ARTIST AT HEART PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY, 19 PERRON ST. ST. ALBERT DEC. 12 Drop-in art class for adults. p.m. info: 460-4310.

[illegible]

BOOK WORK BOOK CLUB SECOND CUP (IT 2 & 3)
ALPINE AVE | Every Wednesday 7:30 pm, info: bookwork@transformation.ca

COFFEE & OPEN MIC NIGHT PRIDE CENTRE, 9540-111 AVE
 Saturdays at 4 p.m. | 488-3234

GLD, WEDNESDAY'S PRIDE CENTRE 9540-111 AVE | Various adult/youngest genres 3 p.m. | 488-3234

GAMES & COFFEE PRIDE CENTRE, 9540-111 AVE | Thursdays at 4 p.m. | 488-3234

ILLUSTRATIONS SOCIAL CLUB: CROSSDRAWERS MEET
MONTHLY VARIOUS LOCATIONS | info: groups@psn.com / groups@psn.ca / (586) 387-3343

MEN TALKING WITH PRIDE PRIDE CENTRE, 9540-111 AVE
 A social discussion group for gay, bisexual and transgendered men to discuss current issues and to offer support to each other. Every 3rd Sun. | info: rainbow@psn.com

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING PRIDE CENTRE, 9540-111 AVE. Every Wednesday except for the first Wednesday of every month. 7 p.m. Info: 408.9234.

SENIORS DROP-IN PRIDE CENTRE, 9540-111 AVE. A social and support group for seniors of all genders and sexualities to talk, have tea and offer each other support. Every Tue and Thu. 1 p.m. Info: buffyshaw.ca.

YOUTH MOVIE PRIDE CENTRE, 9540-111 AVE. Movie chosen by youth (aged 14-25), usually with LGBT themes. Popcorn served. Fridays at 6:30 p.m. Info: brendan@pridecentre.ca

**CANDLELIGHT VIGIL, ALBERTA LEGISLATURE BUILDING, 901
AVE 6 & 101 ST. DET. 12** In support of the binding global climate
treaty in Copenhagen, 5:30 p.m.

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MUSIC PROFILE: SCREECHING WEASEL, BY MIKE DEANE, 10/26/05

More Like The Screeching Daddies

SCREECHING WEASEL MAY BE ONE OF THE BEST PUNK BANDS OUT THERE, BUT HAVING KIDS MAKES IT HARD TO TOUR

SCREECHING WEASEL WITH OLD WIVES AND THE SPIN-OPS
New City (100th Avenue Ave.), Fri. Dec. 11, 10:00 a.m.
Tickets: \$32, available at Blackout, Megastores, Firstout, New City

They are the best of the almost best.

Aside from the Ramones and the Buzzcocks, there is one pop-punk band that stands out as the greatest of all time: Screeching Weasel Bands like Green Day and Blink 182 have always paid homage to Screeching Weasel, as those aforementioned bands took Screeching Weasel's formula, weakened it, made it more palatable and become ridiculously famous. Screeching Weasel, however, never experienced the same level of popularity.

Which might have something to do with their history. They formed in 1986, and Ben Weasel (nee Foster) and John Jughead, along with other rotating members, released albums until 2001, when they decided to call it quits. Now, Foster is in a place where he is able to play Screeching Weasel's songs live, albeit without Jughead (they had a falling out, it wasn't amicable, and Foster has retained the rights to Screeching Weasel while Jughead gets a cut from album sales and merchandise). Foster has reassembled the band with just one long-time member, Dan Vapid (who, Foster says, has always been his favourite member to work with creatively), and taking the show out on the road, one show per month.

Foster called me from his home in Madison, Wisconsin, where he lives with his family—that's right, Mr. Weasel is a dad—and explained to me how Screeching Weasel is able perform once more.

"Our touring days are long over," he explains in his Chicago-meets-Fargo accent. "I've got three months old twins at home and I'm taking care of them during the day, so if we go out and do a fly-in once a month, that's about a week's worth of work for the band, and as the band's manager I'm looking at even more work. Even

before the twins, I stopped touring years ago. Some people are built for it, and some aren't, and [the guys in the band] are just not built for touring."

That doesn't mean that this is some sort of cash grab, or that they're playing out of convenience. Foster is still just as committed to Screeching Weasel as he's ever been. Though the man who crafted the modern punk masterpieces "My Brain Hurts" and "Boogadaboogadaboogad" has grown up, he's still completely immersed in his music and is just as excited, if not more, to be Ben Weasel once again.

"One of the points of doing this is that a lot of people that never got to see us play are getting that opportunity. And we've got the best set-list that we've ever had, and I know I'm biased, but we have the best line-up we've ever had as well. It's a really good time to see the band."

Still, it's a bit worrying for some fans that long-time member John Jughead will not be on tour, and that most of the members are new comers. Foster stands behind the latest line-up, and also thinks that this group is the best in carnation of Screeching Weasel ever, and not just musically.

"All of the guys are good musicians, but they also have a respect for what the band did in the past, and don't want to compete with it. They want to play it correctly for the fans because they are fans," he explains. "In the old days it was much more of a traditional band where, sure, I was the leader and de-facto manager, but there were always arguments and tension and the occasional power struggle, but these days it's pretty clear that I'm running the show and I'm calling all of the shots and there's not going to be really any arguing about it. It took me a long time to realize that I do know what's best for my band."

Foster has always had these outspoken opinions that have run counter to the popular peak-punk ethos of the community, and it has kept him as a highly contentious figure in punk rock for nearly three decades. Foster has always ruffled the feathers of the punk-rock purists and given them fodder for contempt, and now that Foster is more grown-up, he stands even more



Middle-Aged Punks | This week's show may be your last chance to catch a Screeching Weasel. PHOTO SUPPLIED

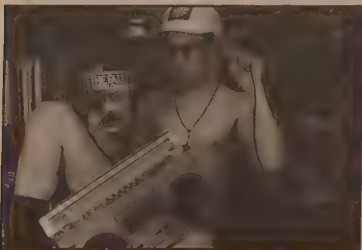
strongly behind this traditionalist attitude.

"It's the kind of attitude that is decreed by a lot of people who have never actually been in a band, but in my experience it's made playing in a band much more enjoyable," he explains unapologetically. "There's no room for misinterpretation, and we all go in fully informed and the guys know exactly what the situation will be so they can just in and just play, they don't have to worry about the rest of it. Too often in the past I allowed friendship and business mingle too much, and a lot of resentment would build up. So, now it's like I'm the boss and here's the deal, take it or leave, and if you leave it, that's fine, no hard feelings, but if you take it, don't take it and then complain about it later."

At this point, the future of the band is not entirely certain. Foster and company will be playing one-off shows around North America, and will hopefully be writing a new album in the coming year for release at the beginning of

2011. Prior to this will be a new release by Foster's other band, The Riverdales, which features all but one of the same members of the reincarnated Screeching Weasel. And fans shouldn't expect anything too different from previous outings, just something better thought out and crafted than Teen Punks In Heat. Foster still lists the Ramones, The Kinks and Buddy Holly as his most listened-to bands, and with that as the basis fans should be pleased with the outcome.

"We've done so many records, I feel like we have to be careful and make sure it's a kick-ass record. Not to overthink it, but we have to make sure that the the songs are good and that it lives up to what we've done in the past. There are so many expectations, so maybe you can never really live up to them, but you can at least go out and not embarrass yourself, and release something of quality. So, I'm not going to half-ass it, I'm working hard to make sure it's the absolute best of the tunes that I have."



Hot Cop of Joe | On Sunday rapper The Joe will release the new video for his track "You're Cool." Watch how he's cool too late. PHOTO SUPPLIED

HOT TICKETS • THIS WEEK'S MUST-SEE SHOWS

BIG TOP

The Old Ugly Circus
Theatre | Dec. 13

Tonight the marquee above Avenue Theatre should read "Give me your ugly, your old, your frozen masses yearning to warm up." The wickedest record of 10th Avenue. Send these, the homeless, homeless-tossed to me, lift my lamp beside the Avenue Theatre door! You, that about sums up the spirit of this musical circus, according to rapper The Joe who hopes the city's down and out and social rejects show up to the live to bands on the bill warm their soul. The line up includes the likes of Mike Month, Cally Fisher, and Doug Hynes who will debut his video for "Hey Lewis"

BIG TIME

Sloan
Starlite Room | Dec. 12

Considering bassist Chris Murphy was nearly killed in Toronto by a moped this summer, it's no coincidence that Sloan's 12th studio release is titled *Hit & Run*. Fortunately the only thing that was broken beyond repair was his bike. His collar bone is healing just fine thank you very much, and just in the nick of time too. Last month CBC announced that Sloan had been nominated for the Life Time Achievement Bucky Award. With all the luck by the time this snipet runs tomorrow, these Halifax home boys will have one more accolade to add to their distinguished career.

BIG BLOSSOMS

Blazing Violets
Brixia Bar & Grill | Dec. 11

We know it's colder than our grandma outside but don't worry as this local party rock powerhouse starts burning through its set list from their latest disc *Violet Riot* you'll shed your sweats, and be dancing ballroom, drenched in Snils in no time — and if you don't there may be something seriously wrong with you. To top things off, as Nov 4 the Violet's Facebook status informed us that song writing mode had been engaged with a tasty promise of fresh material for tonight's show it's time to skirt and roll rolls can you feel the groove? Because we can

MUSIC • MANRAYGUN • BY THOMAS PATRICK PRINGLE (Edmonton)

Everything Is Temporarily Nostalgic

LOCAL PUNK BAND, MANRAYGUN, SING THE PRAISES OF ALCOHOL AND REMINISCES ABOUT THE GOOD OL' DAYS IN THEIR NEW CD

MANRAYGUN WITH PALE MOONLIGHTS

The Acton (525 Jasper Ave.), 9:45 at the show, includes the CD. Fri. Dec. 11 (Doors at 9 PM)

Nostalgia is a heavy thing. Local rockers Manraygun confront their memories and the post-post-modern angst associated with nostalgia in their new album *Everything is Temporary*, which provides a fascinating commentary on the shallowness of the American Dream. "Nostalgia is a double edged sword," says songwriter Dennis Lenarduzzi. "It's a good thing to look back, but it could be something where people get trapped into cycles and [wait] for that intervention."

That's exactly where *Everything is Temporary* gets its legs. Manraygun channels the gritty writing of Charles Bukowski or Raymond Carver into a full sound that makes you wonder what *Born in the U.S.A.* might look like with a Canadian flag instead of the stars and stripes. While they might tell tales of yore, the band also brings their music to a climax of raw

country barroom cheers.

Barroom cheers are familiar sounds to this band, as so many of their songs celebrate booze. "Well, we all enjoy alcohol," Lenarduzzi laughs. "Part of it is just tapping into the great myth. There's all the background noise of what we've grown up with in terms of our music and poetry, [and] it becomes part of the lexicon of how we express ourselves."

Alcohol is certainly an expressive force in *Everything is Temporary*, where the blues-romp "Whiskey Makes a Wise Man Wiser" sings its praises, the excellent "Carousel" asks "Who could ever raise their glass to a self-made martyr?"

While a couple of these tunes sing the blues of smoky barrooms, Manraygun also manage to fully embrace their punk roots. "Punk for us is a very broad term," Lenarduzzi says. "It's a way of being and a way of carrying that torch." To that end, Lenarduzzi met with British folk-punk legend Billy Bragg while he was in town last month, and the band is taking a lead on Bragg's "I'll Guitar Doors" initiative. "[It's] basically program that puts guitars in the hands of inmates and helps inmates with mentoring, so they can express

themselves through music. We're hoping to effect some change, which is what punk is supposed to do."

Lenarduzzi recalls fondly his days in the Edmonton punk scene, hanging out with The Clash backstage at the Kensington Field house, how The Ramones played the loudest show he's ever seen at the Convention Centre South, or how he was the first to look the like Hot Chili Peppers, and about 15 people showed up. "So what's his take on who a lot of bands today shy away from telling more hard-hitting stories? A lot of it seems to be about sound, or rhythm, or being really cool, or something," Lenarduzzi says. "We've come to terms with that, we're of a certain age. Sorry but I just don't look good in skinny pants."

But Manraygun out-punks the American Apparel generation any day for an album that likes to dwell on the past. *Everything is Temporary* shows absolutely no regret — and that might be the most punk thing of all. "I been involved in music for a long, long time. One day I went 'what am I doing? I'm not getting any younger.' As far as any regrets, Lenarduzzi says. "This band was founded on getting rid of that stuff."



Manraygun | Andrew MacIsaac/Edmonton Journal

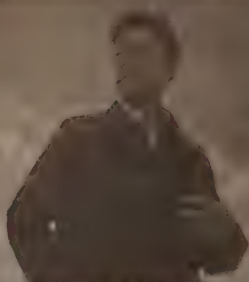
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MUSIC PROFILE: MAGNETA LANE - BY KATHLEEN BELL (100 words)

A Trip Down Magneta Lane



Magneta Lane | Last Valentine (center) obscures own lyrics. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

A SELF-PROFESSED SUPER LYRIC NERD MAKES WRITING HER FOCUS ON THE NEW CD, GAMBLING WITH GOD

MAGNETA LANE WITH SLOAN AND TV HEART ATTACK
The Stadler Room (100-108 102 St) Dec. 12, Doors at 8pm
Tickets: \$20 @ PickettMusic, MagNetas and BlackZyde

On the road, somewhere between Virginia and Massachusetts, its dreary and raining. Lulled by her surroundings, Magneta Lane's singer/guitarist, Lexi Valentine, is seconds from falling asleep in the back of the band's tour van until I call. A little dazed, she answers.

"I'm here I'm awake," she assures. Snapping herself back from the edge of slumber, her voice eases, returning to its usual inviting tones for our chat. While rain rolls down her wino and small towns roll by, we talk rock 'n' roll.

It's an auspicious time for the Toronto trip, as Magneta Lane's sophomore LP, *Gambling With God*, has finally found its way into the world on Last Gang Records. It's been a long

labour of love, three years after their debut, a year and a half after they started recording it and around six months after the last track was put to bed. "I don't think we've ever taken so much time to actually sit and look at our music and say 'what do we actually want to do with this?'" Valentine says. And though the title may seem a wee bit cocky for mere mortals, it actually stems from that lengthy process of self-reflection.

While we were saying "Gambling With God," we weren't necessarily saying, like, the white bearded guy up in the sky," she clarifies. "You kind of figure out, as time goes on, that you can't get anything in return until you actually start gambling on certain things in life. At that time there were a lot of decisions that had to be made, whether it was personal decisions or what we were going to do with the direction of the album. While we were in the process of writing, it was like we were gambling with all these choices."

They settled on switching labels, taking some time for themselves to

balance out the work/life scales and, when it came to the actual business of music, they focused on production. They took what they had learned from previous slam-bang recording experiences into the studio, where producer John Drew helped them create a solid rock album. Fronted by the messy rumble of guitars and backed by the hazy crash of cymbals, Valentine's deep drone is cradled in the honesty of Magneta Lane's straightforward three-piece garage style sound. It suits them — not only sonically but morally as well.

"My name comes from the Greek, meaning the thunder of mankind," Valentine explains. "I think that's the kind of approach I take to people, even. I don't know them. If I ever see someone taking advantage of them, it really evokes this feeling of me having to defend that person if they can't stick up for themselves. So, because of that, I find that in a lot of lyrics I feel like I'm almost lecturing somebody about something. I'm almost telling somebody off because that person that I saw going through that didn't have a chance to fight for themselves."

The other thing is that I'm super picky about lyrics," she continues. "My grandfather, he was a writer and he published a bunch of poetry books. The way that he used to blend words together and the imagery that he used to use, I looked at that and thought 'you know what? If he can do this, I guess being part of the family, you have to live up to something.' I obsess over lyrics. Even when I'm listening on the radio, I'll be like did that guy say this? He shouldn't have said that! I'm a super lyric nerd."

Before I say goodbye and let her drift back to watching the rain fall, it seems like the super lyric nerd deserves the last word.

She pauses.

"I just want people to know that we mean it and that's it."

MUSIC PROFILE: IAN CRUTCHLEY - BY PIOTR GRELLA-MOZEJNO (157 words)

New Kid On Block



Ian Crutchley | Composer for immigrants, school moving to Edmonton. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

COMPOSER IAN CRUTCHLEY'S ARRIVAL IN EDMONTON IS LIKE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL MUSIC.

"If I were 25 or so perhaps moving to a large and cruel centre such as Toronto or New York would be an option," says composer Ian Crutchley. "I'd probably have time to adjust, to establish myself, but I suspect the process wouldn't be nearly as enjoyable as it's proven here. He is quiet for a moment and then instantly and firmly concludes, "Well, I'm not twenty-five and there were many reasons to come to Edmonton — and I don't regret it a bit."

No stranger to Alberta, Crutchley taught at the University of Lethbridge, before heading east to spend a decade at Mt Allison University in Sackville, N.B., lecturing on composition and music theory. Early in 2009, he and his partner, the flautist Chenoa Anderson, decided to return to Alberta and, eventually settled in Edmonton. Crutchley currently teaches electroacoustic music and related topics at the University of Alberta.

"When you are my age, each transition threatens to be much harder than the one before. Nothing and I've experienced nothing of the sort in Edmonton. People here are so friendly. They made our arrival really easy. We've barely gotten organized in our new place and performance enquiries have already started pouring in. Chenoa's busy and I've been teaching, composing and working with musicians who want to play my stuff. I already feel like I'm home."

New Brunswick's loss is Alberta's gain. Crutchley, educated at the University of British Columbia and in the U.K., where he received his PhD in Composition at the University

of York, has a fantastic reputation as one of Canada's most inventive sound experimenters. By joining the roster of Alberta's progressive classical composers helps Edmonton compete with Calgary, known for its very strong New Music scene, with the likes of Hope Lee, Allan Gordon Bell, David Eagle, Laurie Radford — all of them recognized internationally — creating a lot of buzz practically with every project. In terms of modern classical composition, Edmonton has for the longest time been perceived as a bit of a backwater. Now, with the arrival of Crutchley, and in no small part due to the quality of his work, that perception is changing.

Crutchley says, "I've been lucky to team up with some great artists. Currently, I'm writing a piece which was commissioned by Ontario's The Penderewski String Quartet. It is ever exciting to write for them. They are legends and deservedly so — how many artists of that calibre have done this much for the sake of Canadian music? The piece is extraordinarily important to me — all composers want to write a string quartet, the genre itself founded and developed by the giants Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Schoenberg, Bartok. Such a huge and overwhelming tradition, and to put me against [that tradition] — isn't it fascinating?"

Crutchley is also composing for the noted East Coast performance artist, Linda Rae Dorman. "She deals with memory, loss, and nature," he explains, "and I'm creating electronic soundscapes for it. Working with Linda is always special to me because there's so much intensity in her performances."

And next? Crutchley finds his inspiration close to home. "I love working with Chenoa," Crutchley laughs. "Edmonton's our new home — let's work together on some new music."

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MUSIC PROFILE: TV HEART ATTACK - BY CURTIS WRIGHT / S22 W03

Nice Guys Finish First?



Even Mom Might Like These Guys | TV Heart Attack plays it nice. PHOTO SUPPLIED

TV HEART ATTACK'S FRONTMAN IS ALL ABOUT SINCERITY. AS THE NEXT BIG THING IN MUSIC PROMOTION

TV HEART ATTACK WITH SLOAN AND MAGNETA LANE
The Seattle Room (408-902-561) Dec. 12, Doors @ 9pm
Tickets: \$20 @ Ticketmaster, Megatunes and Blackbird

Although it's not exactly like American Idol, touring as an emerging band is a lot like an audition. Audiences are a fleeting bunch. We are all too aware of how an artist can be the new black one day and left for dead the next.

Even if the audition goes well night after night, success doesn't often follow. The unfortunate reality exists: music is a cut-throat business and the avenues an artist paves and the connections a band creates make the difference between getting noticed

and being forgotten.

Vancouver's TV Heart Attack has a plan. They might not take over the rock world anytime soon, but they're relentless in their pursuit of achieving their goals day after day. Through their connection with audiences and their ability to promote themselves, they're building their own brand.

"When you're touring across Canada and you're hitting these cities – these towns – [and] it's your first or second time going there, and the hours are long, is a pretty exciting time for us," says TVHA frontman, Jason Corbett. "It can be tough, but to steal something from Jeff Buckley – after awhile you're like a football player who's out of gas and you make moves that you never thought you had in you. You just base it on instinct."

And while they have the opportuni-

ty to tour and play to crowds – large or small – TVHA certainly hasn't nailed it in with their efforts, as they've pursued every aspect of their band's success. "There are people out there who are interested. There are people following us. You've got to keep working, keep giving them content. That could mean that you keep twittering or maintaining your online presence. Because there are people out there watching and listening. You've got music you have created and there are people who want to hear it... hopefully," Corbett laughs.

TVHA's latest, *Lost in the Sway*, has allowed for their fans to come en masse and things haven't looked better for the foursome. Corbett admits that they are now doing a lot of condensed press and how, through meeting people and making positive connections, they've engineered some unbelievable opportunities through science and networking.

"We've been doing so much press lately and it's amazing. We've got a new video that should have cost us \$150,000, but it only cost us a couple of thousand because of people we knew through networking. We've been really lucky. People in the film industry like us, people in the video game industry like us. We're in the new Vancouver Olympics video game by Sega – it's going to be sold all over the world," says Corbett. "We're credited right on the back and in the rolling credits. That's some major exposure. We're even in NHL 09 – it's a really crazy feeling lately."

"But you know what I've worked hard at? Being sincere with people. I see the way certain bands act towards people and I just cringe, and I can't do that. Over the years I stuck to my guns about the way I treated people and it paid off, not that I expected any reward, but it's sure nice when people come out of the woodwork for us."

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CD REVIEWS



YES NICE
Blindfolded
★★★★

Recent Edmonton ex-pats Nathanial Wong and Scott McKellar — a.k.a. Yes Nice — bare their souls on their beautiful and ethereal new album *Blindfolded*. The tracks are rich and full soundscapes, with lush orchestration, soaring background vocals, and mournful cello's swirling around their songs of passion and longing. "Don't you know it's only cause you can't/You want in love her like you love yourself," Wong mourns on the wistful "Only cause" you can't. Much of the album is dreamy meditation — the perfect soundscapes for gazing out your first-whorled windowpanes in the tundra outside — but when the boys kick it up-tempo they have enough zeal to bring a smile to even the most jaded listener.

"I wanna wait for judgment day/you say ice and I say up in flames," Scott McKellar belts with unabridged passion on the jubilant gallop of "Horses" — possibly the funnest song about the end ill the world not written by P.E.M. Gorgeous and nuanced, *Blindfolded* will warm your heart on the coldest winter night.

JOSH MARCELLIN



SEA WOLF
White Water, White Bloom
(Dangerous Records)
★★★★

If I didn't know any better, I'd swear under oath that Sea Wolf's leader of the pack, Alex Brown Church, is Canadian. Lyrically, Church's focus on delicate descriptions, ominous story telling, beautiful mythologies and the crisp resonance of the ideal word in its ideal place could easily be said to aspire to the great tradition of Canadian song writing. The bottomless layers of violins, cello and various organs struts out that mini-orchestral feel we do so well. Moreover, there is a chill, a darkness and a longing to the band's sophomore album, *White Water, White Bloom*. That is characteristic of musicians that have survived the bleak winters of the north. Church is, in actuality, based out of L.A. But I feel so strongly about his Canadian citizenship I do a little digging et viola — he spent a winter with his love in Montreal writing most of the folk songs on the new album. Whether that's just Church being Church or the influence of a slightly snowier Christmas season, *White Bloom* is a lovely indie-folk album. And it could probably land the band some free health care.

KATHLEEN BELL

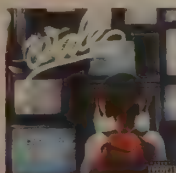


CLIPSE
Til The Casket Drops
(Jive)
★★★★

Virginia brothers Malice and Pusha T's swaggering third full-length album crackles with the intensity and focus bred from their years of slick cocaine. Paranoid drug-trade verses weave through the claustrophobic "Never Will It Stop," and the duo rap their collars on the chest-thumping lead single "Kinky Like a Big Deal" (featuring the reigning king of monster eggs, Kanye West). But *Til The Casket Drops* isn't all drug-running and self-promotion. The classic mid-90's bounciness of "Counseling" reveals the introspective side of a gangsta trying to stay faithful to his woman, and on the family love-note "Champion,"

Pusha T splits the very real story "I thought that life was a bad bitch, bad cash/life with you and kids watching Madagascar." While the album makes a few regrettable forays into the clichés of cash, clothes, and hos, *Til The Casket Drops* balances sweet-creed, honesty, and tight beats make it one of the best hip-hop albums of 2009.

JOSH MARCELLIN



WALE
Attention Deficit
(MCA/Universal)
★★★★

Unlike, say, Kanye West, Wale's strut and ingenuity is his only real value. And although he does like to mention his name a lot, he is not like too many other rappers. Wale's obsession for megalomania doesn't create the hype. After putting out several mixtapes, including 2008's brilliant *Selfitled* featuring Muxtape about Nothing, where he asked "what is the deal with this rap stuff?" Since *Napster*, this game's been crashing. Wale has finally come out with his first official release. Wale realizes that in an era where you can download *Attention Deficit* before you finish reading this review, his opportunity is

solely based on taking the hip-hop world by storm and using media for good. Resisting the urge to make his personality the merchandise, *Attention Deficit* is a product filled with peppy beats and soul-inspired loops, driven by always shrewd, Tribe-Called-Quest-like rhymes of Wale. Download Wale's mixtapes, buy this album.

CURTIS WRIGHT

LISTEN • BY FISH GRIWKOWSKY

SIGN NO MORE
MUMFORD AND SONS

Before it's too late and buried under all the ice, perhaps the toughest folk album in the year, out of England like they all used to be back before anyone had dental plans.

Don't let the dumb and certainly accidental pun in the name turn you off; this is toothy songwriting, a little like Neutral Milk Hotel (aimed down and loaned Bonnie Prince's favourite banjo pick "If only I had an enemy bigger than my apathy" could have won).

It's just one line worth quoting at the races. That's from "I Gave You All," sung by Marcus Mumford like it's bitterly meant, indeed. "Sign No More" is one of those records that crawls up to you late at night, when you want to crank it up and tumble through its vegetable-skin levers, but don't want to wake anyone up. Luckily, they just invented something called headphones, where you can really begin to dig just how well pasted these echoing, yellowed-sounding acoustic songs are (because producer Mattie Davis, who thanks to working with Blink and Arcade Fire understands all about contrast, quietness and subsequent

Land III Daily Queen exorcisms. More brain fodder, see if this fits your life at all. "But it was your heart on the line, I really fucked it up this time, didn't I, my dear?" Yeah, I thought so. Are you thinking III them or your sweet wife? It doesn't really matter. "Thistle and Weeds" is another sensual killer at the duo, a minor-key descent into inevitability. "Corrupted by the simple snuff of riches blown, I know you have felt much more love than you've shown — and I'm on my knee — and the water creeps to my chest."

Yes! Maybe stay away from this is you're pissed off at your ex, ok?

★★★★

TOMAS MARSH
SELF-TITLED EP

With a little lacked production value that pulls the instruments up in the mix, this heavy and brooding local act might be onto something interesting. Though his vocals

are tedious, Marsh has landed in this extremely heavy no-fly zone between stoner rock and Depeche Mode — I can't even begin to guess what his Wii avatar is wearing. Marsh's lyrics are downright bizarre, spelling disco with an extra "a." Firstname. But I do like

how extremely fucking mad he sounds the whole time, and the sloppiness reminds me of Joy Division. I'd pump the beat up a bit, dive into the goth without apology and go just a little crazier — can't wait to see what happens here.

★★★★☆

OLD SCHOOL
LUCINDA WILLIAMS
CAR WHEELS ON A GRAVEL ROAD [1998]

This solidified album was and is perfect mountain-highway music. It's the stuff of stolen relationships, drinking too much and escaping the fuck out III town whenever possible with an invincible partner. Fittingly, the drawly, slide-chunky songs are all about motion, boozing and trying to have a relationship as hard as they say that is.

It's much softer and more romantic than Williams may actually be, but infinitely sexy from the opening song warning, "The way you move a night in time with me." "Lost It" is the best song, whirling and upbeat in the middle of some incumbent disaster. Sung sad and slow with Emmylou Harris. "Greenville" might also make you want to be in one pleasant way. Try it!

★★★★





MUSIC PROFILE: THE AMBERS • BY KATHLEEN BELL (with video)

A Merry Amber Christmas



All in the Family | Renee, Stephanie, Julie and Amber Suchy make beautiful music together. PHOTO: SUPPLIES

THE FOUR SUCHY SISTERS IN THE AMBERS CELEBRATE THE SEASON WITH A WHOLE NEW CANADIAN CANON

A "NEW" CANADIAN CHRISTMAS CANON

With The Ambers and Bob Sabide

Queen Alexandra Community Hall (10425 University Ave.)

Dec. 11, 6:00pm (6-7 Tickets: \$18 advance; \$22 at door. The on the Square (780-480-1957)

It's Christmas time again. And for The Ambers, a vocal quartet consisting of sisters Renee, Stephanie, Julie and Amber Suchy, it only made sense to say yes when local artist Ben

Sures asked the group to participate in a Christmas concert focused on family. After all, the siblings have been singing together since their voices could merely blend in with a choir of aunts, uncles, parents and grandparents at family gatherings.

Chatting to three of the four sisters over coffee on Whyte, it turns out that carolling had been a waning tradition around the Suchy household, but they're more than happy to revive it this year. "We had a couple rehearsals last week and we were all a bit nervous," begins Stephanie, the bubbliest of the crew. "But we started

singing and I just had a flashback: a really big flashback, to all of us sitting in our bathroom recording in the bathtub a Christmas tape for a Christmas present for our parents."

"And Mom's banging on the door because we had to go to church," adds Amber, immediately immersed in the same memory.

"I remember it was a long tape recorder and you had to push the two buttons together."

"Renee was directing," says Amber. "Not directing but saying, 'this is who we are.'"

"Oh, I was directing," corrects Renee, with a laugh. Clearly, she's the eldest.

"Then afterwards we went to church," continues Amber, overtaking of Renee. "I got hold of the tape recorder and did the songs that I wanted to do because I didn't get to pick any So at the end of the recording there's..."

"Little Amber!" sing Stephanie and Renee in a perfect unison only sisters could accomplish on the fly.

For the upcoming concert, however, the ladies all had a say in the song selection under one condition from Sures — the songs had to be Canadian. What seemed like a tricky proposition at first soon became an engaging challenge. "We want to turn them into classic Christmas songs," says Stephanie. "Because I don't think they really are yet. People know them as Canadian songs but I don't think they're really recognized as Christmas carols in their own right."

Together they've come up with a list that includes a mix of newer songs as well as the canonical, such as Gordon Lightfoot's "Song for a Winter's Night," and Jon Mitchell's "The River."

I point out those Canadian classics have a slightly sombre bent. "I thought about that with 'The River' and then I thought that's part and parcel of holidays," says Renee.

"I don't necessarily find them depressing," says Amber. "I find them to be comforting and homey."

"Which is why she is singing [Leonard Cohen's] 'Hallelujah' and I am not," jokes Renee.

"I'm not sure they are so depressing as they are melancholy," adds Stephanie. "And I think that's a real sentiment of winter in Canada — you know you're cozy in your house. It's cold outside. They're expressing ideas I think all Canadians can relate to."

And if we experience the holidays differently, then maybe we should celebrate differently. At the very least, we can sing along to our very own Christmas canon, no matter how beautifully depressing or strangely comforting you happen to find it.



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FILM PROFILE • CHRISTIAN MCKAY • BY MO STEWART (57) words

Citizen McKay Tackles The Big Screen

CHRISTIAN MCKAY GETS LUCKY IN HIS FIRST FILM ROLE EVER. WATCH HIM OUT-ORSON ORSON WELLES.

ME AND ORSON WELLES

Directed by Richard Linklater, Starring Christian McKay, Zac Efron, Claire Danes, Opens Friday, Dec. 11

The accent is unmistakably English. British thespian Christian McKay is in Louisville, Kentucky, on a promotional tour for his new film, *Me and Orson Welles*. It's not just his new film, though — it's the first and only one for the 36-year-old.

"This is it, this is my first film... it may be my last film," he quips. "It was one of those marvelous, being in the right place at the right time [scenarios] I never thought that would happen to me, but it did."

McKay had previously played Welles in a popular one-man show in his native England, which he reluctantly agreed to revive for a 16-night run in New York City. On the final night, director Richard Linklater showed up to check out his performance.

"I stood there like an imbecile and gave him the names of famous Hollywood stars who could play the role, thinking, you know, not even in my wild imagination, which is pretty wild, that there's no way he can cast an unknown limey as this great American icon," McKay recalls. "No way."

Linklater disagreed, and watching *Me and Orson Welles*, it's hard to imagine it any other way. Far beyond the physical resemblance, McKay's embodiment of the young, pre-obesity Welles is uncanny, riveting and entirely three-dimensional. Perhaps not since Peter O'Toole's role as *Lawrence of Arabia* has a movie so heavily rested on the shoulders of an unknown actor from the British Isles. McKay manages to nail every aspect of the legendarily difficult genius, including, of course, his powerful, unmistakable voice.

"Impression or imitation would have been absolute death," admits McKay. He realized immediately and intuitively that he would have to dig deep to fill Welles's ample trousers. Then



Citizen McKay Plays To The Crowd: Orson Welles in living colour. PHOTO SUPPLIED

there was the additional challenge of portraying a larger-than-life character with the inherent subtleties required for the big screen.

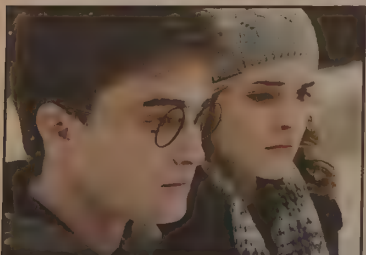
"Richard said, 'You can play the larger-than-life character and you can boom and you can scream, but you need to learn how to do it with in the shot, so that the camera can find you absolutely within the moment and find the truth and the embodiment,'" McKay explains. "So I thought that was a very interesting thing, no imitation, no impression, just me to reference,

to become him. I knew I had to find my Orson. So, I'd come in, in the morning, take the old man out of the suitcase and become him."

McKay and Linklater's Orson is proving to be a big hit with the critics. His performance was recently nominated for a Film Independent Spirit Award for best supporting male. Previous winners include Steve Buscemi, Benicio Del Toro, Bill Murray and Willem Dafoe. In truth, McKay's star outshines the entire movie and he dwarfs his more famous co-star Zac

Efron, who plays the part of Richard (the "Me" in the film's title).

McKay's Wikipedia entry is currently a mere stub and he claims that, until very recently, he didn't have an agent. He admits, however, that the film has opened up a lot of possibilities for his now-burgeoning career. "Somebody said to me the other day, 'This will change your life,' and I honestly replied, 'I don't want it to,'" he says. "I have a lovely life. I'm really enjoying the ride. I don't expect anything of it."



The Boy Who Lived With Unfortunate Fashion Sense (Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson are quizzical as Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince. PHOTO SUPPLIED)

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MUSIC

I Sell The Dead

CAST | Dominic Monaghan, Larry Fessenden

So, if you are a grave robber, don't dig up the body buried by itself just outside of the cemetery. It is a well known fact that no good will come of that. So, when Dominic Monaghan-Charles (See what I did there?) and Larry Fessenden proceed to do just this I knew there was going to be some awesome trouble. Highlights include: a veritable cacophony of eldritch English slang, and "the alien scene." An utterly whimsical horror romp, *I Sell The Dead* is as fun as a bag of bees. Cornical in parts, moosy in others and fervent in the rest, this little ditty is a very good time.

MUSIC

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

CAST | Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson

No matter what you want to say about the Harry Potter movie adaptations, at least they are entertaining. Half-Blood Prince is no exception and even takes the series into an even darker, more fully developed level. Harry, Hermione and Ron find themselves fighting puberty, each other and some visually stunning magical mayhem from within and without. Harry Potter 6 spins a inspired little tale that keeps you interested until the end. Also, yes, the film ends like the book does. Hermione is a dupe.

MUSIC

Julie and Julia

CAST | Meryl Streep, Amy Adams

While watching Julie and Julia I thought three things. 1) I have a very serious and somewhat worrisome crush on Meryl Streep. 2) Eating simple foods like Rasin Bran while watching this film makes you feel like a dodo. Aside from those two major mental ingredients, I thought the movie was a bit heavy on the amount of corniness that was added but realized that it acted as a bit of a palate cleanser for the stronger portions of the film. But some of the zanier dialogue left a zesty aftertaste to an inventive and charming main course. Which was the movie, btw.

FILM REVIEW • ORSON WELLES • BY MO STEWART | 101 words

The Importance Of Being Orson

CHRISTIAN MCKAY'S RESEMBLANCE TO THE CLASSIC MOVIE MAN IS STUNNING. BUT DO THE SIMILARITIES END THERE?

ME AND ORSON WELLES

Directed by Richard Linklater, starring Christian McKay, Zac Efron and Claire Danes

What a swell concept: A movie about a lifetime in history when movies weren't primarily about movies. Instead, it's about a play, and Welles' time in the acting trenches of radio and theatre. Welles is pretty much known for three things: scaring the hell out of Americans with his 1938 *War of the Worlds* radio broadcast, directing and starring in *Citizen Kane* (1941) and a couple other black-and-white masterpieces, and dying in 1985, having not directed a film in decades and looking exactly like he did in his *Citizen Kane* old-man makeup (his final film role was the voice of robot Unicorn in *The Transformers: The Movie*).

Me and Orson Welles prodates all of these claims to greatness. It's 1937 and Welles and his fledgling Mercury Theatre Company are mounting their debut production: Shakespeare's high



Touch of Orson Welles | Zac Efron and Christian McKay as Me and Orson Welles. PHOTO: DAVID LEE

tragedy, *Julius Caesar*, with the setting changed to then-contemporary Fascist Italy. The swinging jazz and art deco opening credits announce that this is indeed a period piece, and director Richard Linklater and his art department army hit every antique target dead centre, from the

sets' costumes, hairstyles and lighting right down to the colour saturation and ubiquitous smoking.

Twenty-two-year-old tween heartthrob Zac Efron as Richard Samuels, the high school student who in typical Hollywood "right-place, right-time" fashion lands a small part in

the production. Welles brilliantly embodied by British actor Christian McKay plays Brutus and directs the Mercury with an iron fist. McKay nails 80% of Welles' charm, hubris and tempestuous genius, not to mention his physical appearance and compelling, commanding voice —

that guy can project! Claire Danes is effervescent and entrancing as Sonia, one of the Mercury's Go. Friday (and Welles' occasional girl Friday, right). The supporting cast includes Ben Chaplin and David Fanning, performing real dead-a-horse-is-generally-over-strong.

The biggest issue with this film is its star. Efron is never completely credible as the titular 80%. His professed love of art and theatre comes across as entirely insincere, and his performance is consistently lacking in depth and substance, surrounded by so many high-wattage personalities and talented actors. Efron is a washout!

The film was shot at Pinewood Studios in England where 1930s New York is recreated in all its Technicolor glory. The serviceable script (adapted from the novel by Robert Kaplow) is kind of corny, telegraphing its plot points well in advance. But Claire Danes does look good, darn sexy in 1930s dress, hairstyle and makeup, and Me and Orson Welles is an equally pleasant and pretty, if not particularly profound, period piece. It's neither comedy nor tragedy, more like light drama, and if all that seems like damning the film with faint praise, well, a probably is

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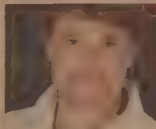
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FILM REVIEW • ARMORED • BY RANDY BRODSKY (325 words)

When The Director's Name Is Nimrod ...



Three Sweating Amigos | Columbus Short, Lawrence Fishburne, and Matt Dillon in a heist gone wrong (S&P/UPC)

... YOU CAN'T EXPECT MUCH FROM THE MOVIE, BUT LOW EXPECTATIONS MAKE FOR A LOT OF FUN

ARMORED

Directed by Nimrod Antal, starring Matt Dillon, Jean Reno, Lawrence Fishburne, Anjani Velasco, Milo Ventimiglia, Steve Ulrich and Columbus Short. Now playing.

★★★

Leave the girl at home. In fact, leave a chunk of your brain at home. Be a guy, have a brew or two first and get ready to not be surprised. Once you've done that, you might just get a lick out of this heist-gone-wrong movie.

Armored is not an action movie, much as some of the trailers would have you believe. It bills itself as a thriller, which will be a bit of a let-down if you didn't take the advice about your gray matter. Careening off to a slow start, (one-hour to get to the turning points of the movie, yes I checked my watch) the movie has a number of clichéd points it has to knock off before we can get into the meat of the movie. Columbus Short plays Ty Hackett, the good guy in a heist gone wrong. The justification for Hackett to join this heist must be taken with a grain of salt. Everything happens in perfect order the reveal that his house is being threatened by the bank, the child welfare agent that threatens to take his younger brother into foster care. It's so well lined up that you'd think the first part of the movie would move faster. It seems like they tried to split the difference between a well-motivated bad choice, and quick convenient reasons to get in over his head. The balance isn't especially effective, but there is a modicum of steady tension that makes that first hour feel like it's only about 57 minutes.

That said, when the crap hits the fan, things move along briskly. It's an effective blend of action and thriller. There's just enough action to drive the story along but it is by no means an example of "chase plus chase plus high score equals action movie." *Armored* as a whole is formulaic, of course, but there's some play within the sand box of the formula that keeps the interest. For instance there's nice cinematography. Yes I said nice. It's not ground-breaking by any stretch, but it's enough to keep the eyes interested where the story and action may lag. It's ... nice. It's also no surprise that the majority of the movie happens in a warehouse where everything goes wrong, as cinematographer Andrzej Sekula did an excellent job of the same thing

in *Reservoir Dogs*. It might actually be an interesting game to count the similarities.

There isn't a lot of stretching the acting muscles, with the possible exception of Fishburne, who has put on weight and shed gray matter for the role. Matt Dillon is an exemplary Matt Dillon playing Matt Dillon doing Matt Dillon things. Columbus Short in the lead role actually pulls off a believable, likeable character who surprisingly sells the choices that this sort of movie lures on. And everyone plays stress really well, unless that was the lines of dripping sweat that seem to permeate the entire movie. Kudos to a make-up department that keeps glycerine manufacturers in business. But the guys won't be "on-armored" at



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FILM REVIEW • UNMISTAKEN CHILD • BY MICHAEL HINGSTON | 161 words

It's Not Easy Being A Lama

FOR A KID WHO IS TAKEN AWAY FROM HIS PARENTS TOO SOON, IT SURELY ISN'T. CULTURES CLASH IN UNMISTAKEN CHILD.

UNMISTAKEN CHILD

Directed by Nati Baratz. Metro Cinema (Zoothe Hall, The Citadel), Fox-Tues, Dec 11-15.

★★★☆☆

For more than 20 years, Tenzin Zopa has been the most beloved student—or "heart disciple," as he calls it—of an esteemed Tibetan master named Lama Konchog. When the master passes away at age 84, Zopa is given the unenviable task of finding his un-mistaken reincarnation (and charged by no less an office than that of the Dalai Lama himself). Then the Buddhist monk does something unexpected: he turns to the camera and explains, in English, how he feels.

In more ways than one, Nati Baratz's documentary *Unmistaken Child* takes a surprisingly hands-on approach to its subject, and manages to turn up some fascinating material. Zopa's four-year search, in which he ventures to many a tiny village tucked away in the Indian, or Nepalese, or Tibetan countryside, is part of a centuries-old dictum, and yet flashes of 21st-century life keep popping up—not the least of which is Baratz's digital camera, which slithers intrusively through several of Zopa's prayer rituals. The monk's car and puffy North Face jacket are similarly jarring, though at least these are Zopa's own forays into modernity.

In fact, the film often feels like it could be a massive hit, were it simply translated to a different medium. Imagine how a Booker Prize jury, for example, would salivate upon hearing this story: a devout monk



The Chosen One | (Clockwise from top left) Zopa, Baratz, and the monk's car

—handsome and charming but also wracked with worries of inadequacy—must journey to prove his faith by finding the reincarnation of his deceased master (and, doubt for get, his father figure). Before setting out, the monk has a dream where he glimpses a mysterious child's face; then wakes up. He consults abbots, and gets in-depth astrological readings performed. On paper, it's perfect. Add some flowery descriptions of Buddhist rituals and paraphernalia, fluff it up to 550 pages, and boom, you're done.

As a film, however—and more pressingly, as a real event—*Unmistaken Child* greets heavily against the Western viewer's conscience. Baratz is smart in getting Zopa to serve as a talking head, the monk explaining his various emotional states with warmth and sincerity, but the director sails right by the larger question of the legitimacy of what's being filmed.

Let's state it in plain terms: Zopa is on a mission to take a young child from his natural parents unwillingly. Sure, the monks believe that they are working in the name of the divine, but the parents of the boy Zopa finds don't seem all that devout. And certainly the child himself is in no way capable of grasping his situation. All of this is filmed with care and scored with a quietly regal soundtrack, but non-believers everywhere are forgiven for feeling queasy at watching a perfectly content family torn apart.

And it's not like the boy will have much of a chance to question the world he's thrown into. Sure, he'll grow up receiving standing ovations and bows of reverence every time he walks into a room, but as he himself screams, when Zopa closes the gate on his departing parents is the film's climax. Don't let them go. Now. I don't have any friends.

Is this a happy ending?



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AUTHOR PROFILE: LEILAH NADIR • BY ZEB QURESHI | 122 words

An Orange Tree Grows In Baghdad

AUTHOR LEILAH NADIR TALKS ABOUT A HOMETOWN SHE'S NEVER SEEN, AND HER STRUGGLE TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE IRAQ WAR

THE ORANGE TREES OF BAGHDAD: IN SEARCH OF MY LOST FAMILY
By Leilah Nadir. Kelly Porter books, 326 pages, \$22.95

With media coverage of the Iraq war in an all time low, only a few people know what is really going on — Leilah Nadir happens to be one of them.

Nadir's award-winning memoir, *The Orange Trees of Baghdad: In Search of My Lost Family* captures the unrelenting emotional angst felt by family in Iraq, yet maintains journalistic poise and an activist zeal. From the vibrant, crowded streets of London to the Ottoman-era villas in Beirut to the fine silk shops of Damascus, the book is a cultural journey just as much as an emotional one, highlighting Nadir's personal struggle in trying to connect with her Iraqi identity.

Born to an Iraqi Christian father and British mother, she also brings forth a minority perspective often ignored by the mainstream media. Narratives of loving family banter and the sweet innocence of childhood are quickly juxtaposed with scenes of flying body parts, thunderous explosions that shatter windows, damaged churches with overflowing crypts and victims who have lost hope through lost limbs.

In the end, Nadir exposes a side to the war that the West cannot see, and she does so through a beautifully written, in-your-face style that is not easily forgotten.

SEE writer Zeb Qureshi talks to Nadir on the phone at her home in Vancouver.

SEE Magazine: What was your motivation behind writing the book?

LN: Well, it was a number of factors, but everything sort of came together when the invasion happened in 2003. We all watched with horror as the war seemed to unfold before our eyes and we're all kind of helpless to do something. At that time I had really started to con-

nect with my relatives in Baghdad and realized that they had so little idea of what was going on outside, and we had no idea what was going on inside because the media had stopped covering Iraq during the sanctions. I felt there was this huge gap on the human side between what we understood to be happening and what was actually happening. I started writing some journalism and commentaries about that story by focusing on my family's experience. It snowballed and I realized there was a book there.

SEE: What did incorporating that personal family connection mean to you?

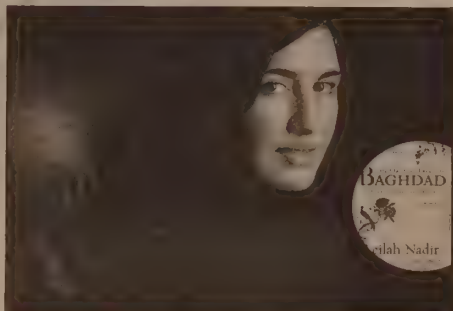
LN: Well I felt it just humanizes the situation and for myself when you hear about a war and a calamity happening elsewhere it's easy to feel distant from it, but the minute that it's affecting people you know, people you love, people who are connected to you by love has an entire different feeling to it. All the theories whether war is a good idea, or a dictator needs to be removed become theoretical, and it just comes down to the practical day to day things people are going to have to live through. The only way I could express that was to go as intimate as I could and create that emotional connection because I felt that was lost. Unless you care about something from an emotional point of view, you're not ever going to care.

SEE: Could you tell me a little about the writing process?

LN: I started making the notes in 2003 and it probably took another year I realized I was writing more than just articles. It took a year to year and half to do the research, collect everything together, and create a narrative that worked.

SEE: There's a recurring theme in the book about you not being able to go to Iraq and how you long to visit one day. Has writing this book brought a level of peace and lessened that desire or increased it?

LN: Sort of both. I think I felt really impatient I couldn't go there in the time and I had to do something with all the energy around it. The



My heart belongs to Baghdad | Leilah Nadir and her beautiful new book. *The Orange Trees of Baghdad*. PHOTO SUPPLIED

week the book came out in 2007 my relatives who I write about in the book decided to flee Iraq. Suddenly, it felt like all our family had left was what I had written in the book because all the physical connections were gone. So I felt really grateful that I had written it, but yeah it increased my desire to go. I mean, I still think about it all the time.

SEE: Have all your contacts left Iraq or do you still stay in touch with people there?

LN: My closest connections have left, but they have family who are still there and so we do hear about the conditions on the ground. But that direct connection has changed.

SEE: Your book came out in 2007. What's the situation there right now? We don't hear much about the situation there anymore due to health care reform and Obama etc.

LN: I think it's a little terrifying because the media has pulled back so much just to deal with security. There are so few western journalists working there. If you watched Al Jazeera you'd get much more of a view — when Obama took power he said he would end oc-

cupation which he still has not done. To me, the media has decided that the war is over, but it isn't. Few weeks ago there was a huge bombing in Baghdad and over a hundred people were killed. Baghdad itself is utterly changed. It's a honeycomb of checkpoints and blast walls. It's worse than it was a few years ago. Society is completely destroyed and people are having to align themselves with their religious and ethnic backgrounds which they didn't before.

SEE: Do you see any light at the end of the tunnel?

LN: No [Laughs]. I talk to Iraqis quite a bit, and its bad that they have no hope. Outside of some areas of Iraq there's basically anarchy, and there's all these different factions.

SEE: Do you feel like someday you'll get to visit Iraq?

LN: I think I have to hope that I will. You hope that your life is long and hope things will change but it's hard to believe that we're already in the seventh year of occupation, and it's no more safe than it was at the start. I don't hold out hope for any time soon.



Best of Bridget | Check out her Christmas show in the Catalyst, running nightly Dec 10-20. PHOTO SUPPLIED

ARTS BRIEF • UNDER SANTA'S HAT: BRIDGET RYAN'S BIG OL' CHRISTMAS CABARET

For those of you who have grown weary of the annual viewing of the *Christmas Carol*, there's a twist to the traditional holiday theatre fare this season.

Edmonton's cabaret veteran Bridget Ryan has teamed up with playwright Stewart Lemoine and pianist Ryan Sigurdson for 10 days of seasonal sing-alongs, stories, Broadway show tunes — and a few surprises.

Although she's known to many as a City host here in the city, Ryan has been performing cabaret for over a decade and has worked on many varying projects with theatre companies in cities across the U.S. and here at home.

Bridget Ryan's Big Ol' Christmas Cabaret

will be a raucous, spirited affair in the true sense of all that is "cabaret" and guaranteed to be a different show every night.

Several special guests are lined up to join Bridget onstage as she recalls audition horror stories from her time in New York City while demonstrating her puppetry — and singing — skills.

Have fun with the zanyness of high comedy and much seasonal fun. And it's a chance for Bridget to celebrate in her father's legacy after his recent passing.

Expect to laugh, clap and hum-along throughout the show. Stewart Lemoine of Teatro La Quindicina directs, lending his own special brand of humour and holiday fun.

Sterling nominated Ryan Sigurdson accompanies Ryan on the piano, providing a great foil for her comedy style.

Accompanying the cabaret performance is local artist and City cameraman Jason Carter's new series, inspired by his eclectic and varying experiences behind the camera. Nanabush: The Gift of Giving will feature canvas and stone pieces throughout the venue. The art provides a special window into Native culture, and Carter is happy to provide a different viewpoint for the Christmas season.

Tickets range from \$15 to \$20 with a portion of sales benefitting the Tim Ryan Musical Theatre Scholarship Fund.

Not Just Another Camel Story Climate Comedy



Niles' Journey | Through the art of climate change. Photo: Juggled

OR, BECAUSE A PACK OF NILES' JUST DOESN'T SOUND RIGHT. BUT IS THIS KIDS SHOW TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING?

NILES' JOURNEY

Written by David Belke, performed by Zu-Ma Productions.
Dec. 11/and 12 at 7:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Anglican Church
(10037-64th Ave.). Tickets are \$15, \$20 for students and seniors, \$8 for 12 and under. 780-413-5536.

I can't think of another story that has a camel as its main character. I've read stories in which the lead character resembles and has the temperament of a camel. I've read stories of gentlemen who ride camels whilst playing a sport a lot like polo, but with a goat's head as a ball. I've even read stories about people living inside of a pack of camel cigarettes. But never have I heard of a story where the sole character is a camel

sillier but also with a bit of a heart. You do what is right for the character and story and for that world. Every play is a different experience: each is a different journey."

Along on the journey with Belke are the puppeteers of Zu-Ma Productions: Lynette Maurice and Gindi Zulu create, perform and inject life into the world of Niles' Journey.

This co-production isn't the first time Zu-Ma and Belke have worked together, but like every new project, the experience is different and uniquely fulfilling in its own way.

"We were looking for something to do for Christmas but we didn't want to do the regular, routine, ordinary sort of stuff," explains Maurice. "We were looking for a different idea, something new and fresh. So we had this little baby camel puppet we developed, who was from a different puppet show. He was so darn cute that we created this whole world for him and gave the idea to David who put together this fantastic script. We often write our own but this is a real treat to have a playwright like David write it."

"The opportunity to do this at Holy Trinity as part of Advent Adventures is really exciting," Maurice continues.

"David has done so much to promote that and hopefully we will see a new audience. I'm loving this artist collaboration. I'm hoping everyone will experience something new and will hopefully adore it as a part of their own Christmas season."

When you think of it, with all this climate change talk, the camel may become more relevant to future Christmases.

Maybe there is a bit of foreshadowing in Niles' maybe

IF YOU CAN'T LAUGH, YOU'LL CRY. SO IF YOU'RE TIRED OF COPENHAGEN COVERAGE, TRY THIS FOR A CHANCE.

U: THE COMEDY OF GLOBAL WARMING

Dec. 18-20, Media Room in the Fine Arts Building 101
University of Alberta (88th Ave. & 101st St.)

Tickets: 780-410-1951, 520 Regalia, 525 Students/General
Artist

I almost got a 10-gallon coffee cup. What can I say? I like them better. But then I remember why I'm here to talk global warming with the writer/director of *U: The Comedy of Global Warming*, Ian Leung. Gosh sets in.

Everything I know about environmental etiquette I learned from Al Gore, but I'm under the impression that these little choices help.

You know you often hear people say, global warming, that would be cool. We'll have longer summers and the winters will be nicer," starts Leung once we sit down. The looming winter chill lurking out the window.

"So I thought that one approach would be to try to talk as much as possible about the way climate change could impact Edmonton. One of the ways climate change will impact the world if things turn out as badly as some people think is that there will be millions of people who lose the land that they live on either because it's being flooded by rising ocean levels or drought has made it impossible to live there. So there will be a lot of shifting around in population."

So this is where Leung begins with a climate change refugee from the Tuvalu Islands landing in Edmonton. Bought here by an oil company as a gesture of appreciation for its knowledge, drowning her home, a love

story ensues.

"There were positions governments were taking — not to mention any names — that felt a bit absurd, worthy of a certain criticism," Leung says, "and kind of just makes you laugh."

Though the play itself cuts at the ridiculous Leung carried out two months of interviews with scientists, activists and politicians. He has taken the documentary-style footage and integrated it into the show, creating a multi-media performance that Leung hopes is not only entertaining but also informative.

"We try to make this clear in the play that the oilman is set up as the villain of the story because stories need villains," says Leung. "[But] it was very interesting to hear from some of the politicians who felt that a lot of the people who run the oil companies are ahead of the Alberta government when it comes to wanting to do something."

But leaving the problems and more importantly the solutions to the issue of global warming in the hands of politicians and oilmen is perhaps the most frustrating aspect of the climate change dialogue (monologue?). The crisis is here and now but the conference is in Copenhagen. "[You're] not powerless," Leung says. "Not only can individuals make a difference by shifting our narrative, how we see the future is an important part of making that change."

I consider my to-go-to-stay coffee conundrum. The to-stay mug was a lovely crimson colour, kept my latte warm and even the caramel foam looked prettier floating on top. No sacrifice, just delicious coffee.

Narrative shifted. Apocalypse



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CBC

BOOKS • BEYOND BELFAST • BY CURTIS WRIGHT (104 words)

The Back Of Beyond



Traveller's Man | Will Ferguson writes adventure stories, not guidebooks. PHOTO SUPPLIED

CURTIS WRIGHT TALKS TO WILL FERGUSON, A MAN OF THE IT'S NOT THE DESTINATION BUT THE JOURNEY SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

BEYOND BELFAST, A 560-MILE WALK ACROSS NORTHERN IRELAND ON SORE FEET

By Will Ferguson, *Winnipeg, Canada*, 298 pages, \$32

I admit I get a tad jealous when I hear about people travelling the globe. So, naturally you'd think it would be mildly cheerless for me to read a celebrated author's tales and talk to him about his extensive travels and the seemingly endless (and equally hilarious) stories that emerge from them. Canadian author and humourist, Will Ferguson's latest, *Beyond Belfast: A 560-Mile Walk Across Northern Ireland on Sore Feet* is an Ulster Trail choose-your-own-adventure book where the "choices" were perhaps the worst ones, but certainly the most adventurous. Yet, if anything, after reading *Beyond Belfast* and speaking with its main voyager, I know that now more than ever, I

need to travel – just not with Will Ferguson as my tour guide.

"I'm not a good traveller because my mind wanders," says Ferguson. "If you travelled with me expect to get lost and know that your first goal is to meet people, to tell with the itinerary. If something else comes up contrary to plan, go that way. If you meet people and the entire trip turns, that's what happens. I mean, you don't take stupid risks, even though I do more than I should, but the thing is to follow where the trip will take you, not impose an itinerary on the trip."

And now that I have a nicely-sorted, slightly frightening, yet quite engaging litany of expectations for the Will Ferguson Adventure Co., I now know why they let the professionals set up travel agendas.

"I wrote a guidebook once – it's now out of print – and I got a letter from someone saying 'Dude, you led me and my girlfriend into the ocean with your directions.' It turns out I got left and right confused, a pretty important detail. That's when I real-

ized I'm not cut out for guidebook writing," Ferguson laughs. "I like writing memoirs. Guidebook writing is completely different than writing memoir. It's a completely different part of your brain. Some people are great at writing guidebooks. They know when the train left, how much the hotel costs, what the admission is, what the main sites are. I'm not like that, I wander away. Guidebook writers are the really great travellers, they're efficient. I'm a terrible traveller. I'm always lost, I'm always missing steps, and I'm showing up when the museums are closed."

Ferguson might not excel at travelling safe or according to any sort of plan whatsoever, but the tales he heaves from the misadventures are hilariously rewarding to the reader. His passion for travel and escape is no secret, yet he understands that his talents lie in the way in which a story is crafted and delivered, not how immediately impressionable the trip might be.

"It's not the story, it's the telling – it's how you tell them. I have a friend who took a trip across Mongolia and it is the most boring story I've ever heard. You'll never want to go to Mongolia after listening to him. But my neighbour talked about going to the mall with her kids and her husband over Christmas and she'd taken her baby out of the carriage, but they were still using the carriage to open doors and slam things around. She told us about the horrified looks on faces. It took her 20 minutes to tell us the story and we were in tears because we were laughing so hard about it. It was a trip to the mall – and we wanted to hear more," Ferguson says. "It's really not where you go and how you do it. It's how you tell it."

VISUAL ARTS • HELMETS • BY MARI SASANO (102 words)

Art Of The Helmet

EDMONTON ARTIST RYAN MCCOURT MAKES SOME PRETTY FANCY THINGS TO PUT ON YOUR HEAD

PORTRAIT HELMETS

Common Sense Gallery, 10240 88 St.

By appointment, until December 20th.

These aren't your usual helmets, folks. Not the hockey variety, and certainly not football. These helmets are art.

"The first helmet I made, the Elvis King, started out as an abstract sculpture. I was using a piece of brass in the shape of a face, cut in half."

Ryan McCourt is best known for making massive steel sculptures. He has taken part in four exhibitions and has commissions for large, outdoor public art. But with "Portrait Helmets," he turns to a smaller, literally more human scale: wearable art, in the form of brass helmets.

Each helmet is created as a character, such as the Helm of the Grieving Gardener, the Helm of the Critic, or the Helm of the African Queen. Working on this scale means that McCourt is able to add more detail into each piece, but ultimately it isn't much different than his larger work.

"The large works, those are made of steel," he says.

"There's a general shape vocabulary in steel, with pipes and round shapes. Whereas in brass, the range of shapes you could start with are much broader. There are some of the same structural things, but also you can also have dishes and bows and decorative stuff, and menageries of animals."

And then of course, there are other advantages, many decorative elements are available pre-made, in

the form of brass ornaments.

"With the Helm of the Gorgon, I knew I needed a bunch of snakes. It's hard to find brass snakes, so I had to improvise using long-necked birds. So I shopped all the Goodwills to buy them up. I started to get recognized at the Value Village, too. They're quite kitschy."

The bird butts were recycled into Lisa Simpson-like hair spikes for the African Queen.

McCourt sees each object as a projection of a character, but at the same time, they have the possibility of transforming the wearer.

"I suppose it's imaginative," McCourt says.

"In reality, they are pretty uncomfortable, but in each piece there is the idea of transformation. A lot of people call them masks. And they are a kind of disguise."

"Many have face pieces, and they take on a theatrical role. The African Queen, for example, is based on traditional masks used for ceremonies."

McCourt connects his work to a larger cultural tradition.

"I think it's very rich, culturally. At a sculptural level, each helmet stands in for the head. The personality is in the head wear. It's a riddle, you pick out the details to tell the story. And it's a personal thing, everyone sees something different."

He even has a helmet for me.

"The Helm of the Critic has a globe, a ring of keys and a flower on the brow. And there are magnifying lenses where the eyes are, so you can see all the fine details, drawer pulls as hair, and a moving chin piece so it can talk."

It's a perfect likeness, metaphorically speaking.



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SEX + ADVICE | 133 words

Marry Her If She Indulges Your Foot Fetish



SAVAGE LOVE: DAN SAVAGE

ONE PARTNER'S SEXUAL SELFISHNESS AND ANOTHER'S SEXUAL FRUSTRATION RARELY PROVE TRIVIAL

I am a 23-year-old male who has been in a relationship with a great woman for four years now. She is an amazing person, and we oftentimes talk about marriage. The issue is this: I have a foot fetish and she is fully aware of it. She doesn't like the idea of me kissing her feet or indulging my fetish in any way. We have sex quite often, and I've always let it slide that she doesn't want any part of my fetish. I don't know what to do, because I'm at a stage in my sexual growth where I need to experience my fetish. I'm getting mixed advice from different people and I just want a straight answer. The sex we have is amazing, but I would enjoy it so much more if I could act on my desires once in a while. Sexually Frustrated Fetishist

Here's a straight answer: Your amazing girlfriend is an amazingly selfish lover, and I'm amazed that you've put up with her bullshit for as long as you have. A foot fetish is not uncommon or outrageous, as fetishes go. SFF: Yours is the least taxing for a non-kinky partner. It's not like you're into shit or choking or Christian side hugs. Any amazing woman who truly loved you would regard indulging you as a no-brainer.

Share time. I have a good friend who's not kinky at all — unless you count being gay — and he's a runner who goes for long runs every Saturday morning. When he gets home, he handcrafts his boyfriend to a chair in his kitchen, duct-tapes one of his sweaty sneakers over the boyfriend's face, and leaves him there while he has breakfast. My friend — who came to me for advice when his boyfriend confessed his fetish — isn't really into guys with sneakers duct-taped to their faces. But it gets his lover off, and isn't that what lovers are for?

Your lover has had things — she's had you — on her terms for four years. SFF, which means you're going to have to play the breakup card. It's the only leverage you have. Tell her that if she can indulge your fetish — happily and regularly — and take some pleasure in giving you pleasure, she might be "the one." If she can't or won't, she obviously isn't.

(Not that "the one" is anything other than a destructive myth, but for the sake of winning this argument, go ahead and use it.)

Finally, SFF, don't let the girlfriend — or anyone else — tell you that you're threatening to end this relationship over something trivial. Sexual fulfillment is important, particularly if your relationship is exclusive. And the "triviality" of your kink cuts both ways. If your kink is so trivial, why not just indulge you then? And in a long-term relationship — or a marriage — one partner's sexual selfishness and another's sexual frustration rarely prove trivial over the long haul. They're more often grounds for divorce.

I am a 35-year-old partnered gay man, but I've been having an on-line conversation with a married bisexual man that has become an ongoing game of sexual dares. It's a safe form of sexual adventurism for both of us. None of our dares has involved sexual contact with another person, but some of our dares have begun to involve other people at the edges. For example, we've posted ads to Craigslist as submissives and responded to some of the replies from dominant men. None of these interactions with third parties will result in actual contact. It feels a little like we are exploiting the "flakes" aspect of Craigslist, for example, it's common to hear from someone a few times after making contact on Craigslist and then never hear from them again. But it also feels a little like we are using these folks. Is this expansion of our game to involve other people ethical?

Concerned About Harming Craigslist Fellas

P.S. By the way, this letter is itself part of a dare. If you publish it and include a dare in the published reply, I will have to fulfil that dare.

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SAVAGE (cont'd from p. 30)

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I'm a straight guy in my late 20s. I have a girlfriend of several years whom I live with and I love very much. I just read your most recent column, in which you used the acronyms HND (honest non-monogamous dude) and CPOS (cheating piece of shit), and it

your repair?
Aspiring Honest Nonmonogamous Dude

Based on what you've learned about yourself in past relationships, AHND for example, that you're a CPOS waiting to happen, I would encourage you to err on the side of screwing up your current relationship with an honest conversation about your mismatched libidos and

second, daily papers and cable-news outlets reacted to Tiger's "transgressions" by changing the names in the same. Why do powerful men cheat? stories they've been pumping since Bill Clinton blew a load on a White House intern. For the millionth time. Men cheat for the same reasons women cheat, for example, because they're bored or horny or unfulfilled or desperate to see someone else naked for a change. People cheat

LIES, DAMN LIES, AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT MONOGAMOUS PEOPLE BELIEVE IN TIME ONE OR TWO OTHER PEOPLE FOR MONOGAMOUS PEOPLE

struck a nerve. I have never been an HND, I have in the past been a CPOS (though not in this relationship). My girlfriend is lovely, supportive, and generally GGG, and though the sex is good, I have a significantly higher libido than she does and I would like to have a little more variety in my sex life. I want to be an HND, but I don't know how to broach the subject with the girlfriend without ruining our relationship. We are very open about our sex life and our relationship in general, but I think this is probably a "next level" topic that may not go over very well. How do I bring this up without screwing up our relationship be-

your natural and normal desire for a little variety. Lies, damn lies, and statistics demonstrate that, in time, one or the other or both of you will cheat. Better to toss that out there now, even the risk of calmly winding down this relationship before you revert to form/CPOS, than to see the relationship explode after someone most likely you winds up cheating.

And while we're on the subject of cheating, I suppose I'm obligated to say a few words about Tiger Woods. First, let's pretend that Elin Nordegren cheated on Tiger and that Tiger went after Elin with a golf club. Would Clin be viewed as the sole transgressor in the marriage then? Probably not. And

because monogamy isn't natural and we are wired to cheat. That doesn't make cheating right. Of course, people should honour their commitments and blah-de-nine-ton-blah. But we shouldn't encourage people to make commitments we all know they're unlikely to keep. The end. AUCTION NOTICE: Want to answer a question or two in an upcoming column? I'm auctioning off a chance to give advice in this space to raise money for some worthy charities. Go to tinyurl.com/SLaution for details and to bid. Find the Savage Lovecast (Dan's weekly podcast) every Tuesday at thesavage.com/savage mail@savage-love.net

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ASTROLOGY • DEC. 10-16 • BY THE KID

CRUISING' THE COSMOS

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22 - DEC. 21)

After new year, when the sun leaves your sign and you finish your campaign with the divine, it'll be clean-up time. Like after most big bashes, you've gotta deal with the empties, wrappers and ashes. The good news is once things are tidied and your cleanliness is done, you'll be ready to go out and have some real fun!

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22 - JAN. 19)

In the sun enters your sign next week, it'll be the karmic equivalent of change! calendars. The new one's much the same, but it's empty and waits to be filled in, while the old one's destined for the bin. The next year'll be a blast of fun if you're not still hangin' onto the previous one!

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 - FEB. 18)

All the work you've done hasn't been a waste of time, so there ain't no reason for you to be cryin'. Sure, it seems like it was

for naught, but even if it got broken, look at the pieces you've got. This week, ask the heavens for help puttin' 'em together and you'll get help from it up better than ever!

PISCES (FEB. 19 - MARCH 20)

Although it feels like the cosmos has bombed your base, it wouldn't be that hard to face if you know what you could do with a dish-cup-cup. Quit thinkin' about the days of yore, and make it better than it was before. With a little elbow grease and some help from your friends, you'll start seein' success before the year ends!

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 19)

Your present struggles more than just a quail and though you're the one who's got 'em on the run, it ain't time yet to rest on your laurels. Some pockets of resistance'll have annoyin' persistence and are more than ready to go the whole distance. You're crazy if you think it's done, but it ain't that far

from bein' won!

TAURUS (APRIL 20 - MAY 20)

You may have crashed 'n' burned, but at least you've learned, and now that lesson is complete. But how, you ask, can you get back on your feet? Don't worry. You have the technology. You can rebuild yourself better than you were before. Better. Stronger. Faster. And just in time for the new year, too!

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUNE 20)

You're like a gorilla with a gun. You're packin' a lotta power in the palm of your hand, but it ain't much use to you since you can't understand how it works or what it'll do. But if you ask somebody this week, they'll explain it to you - then you'll be able to bust outta the zoo!

CANCER (JUNE 21 - JULY 22)

Although this season ain't supposed to be about material things, you need to focus on

business and the mooah it brings. You've got the givin' spirit all year, 'cause it's natural for you, but right now you've got lotta work to do. This week, the more you concentrate, the more you'll see new areas of opportunity!

LEO (JULY 23 - AUG. 22)

This week, when you feel confidence dyin', watch a nature show 'bout your nameake, the lion. Observer! Its behaviour'll be a lifesaver, 'cause when you realize what you are, you won't waver in the face of adversity. Once you know you're at the top of the food chain, you'll no longer feel like you have to flee!

VIRGO (AUG. 23 - SEPT. 22)

No matter how badly you might wanna kick ass, the best bet now is to let the time pass. It's not that you're wrong and they don't, it's just that whatever they may have comin', it's better to let karma serve it. Chances are,

you'll still get your wish when justice finally brings out their dish!

LIBRA (SEPT. 23 - OCT. 22)

Although scales o' balance can be a beautiful thing, eternal equilibrium would be pretty boring. In fact, everything would have to stop 'cause bein' outta balance makes energy flow to the bottom from the top. If you're wonderin' what to do when life seems a little pale, you've gotta shake it up and tip the scales!

SCORPIO (OCT. 23 - NOV. 21)

A fool and his money are soon parted and, luckily, your foolishness has only just started - it's still early enough to nip it in the bud, cover the wound and stem the flow of blood. Even if you're doin' it outta love 'n' affection, you're startin' a spiral in a downward direction. Remember next week that though it's good to give, you need some yourself if you wanna live!

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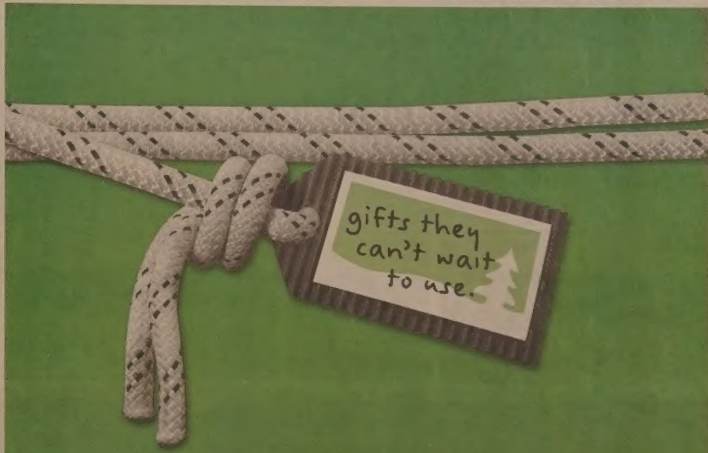
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Isabella: Busty Italian petite
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Calix: Extremely busty blonde
with slender figure.
Talia: Busty Spanish beauty with
long dark hair.
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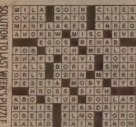
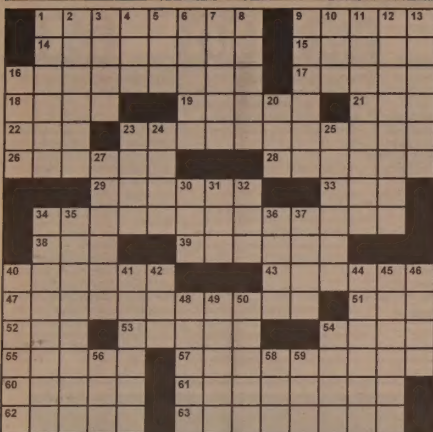


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SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

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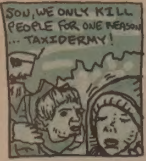
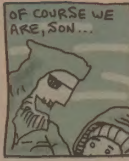
- 1 Health services provider for seniors
- 9 Goa garments
- 14 Vapotee
- 15 Dog tag, e.g.: abbr.
- 16 OutKast album that rated #1 on Metacritic's Top Albums of 2000
- 17 Island in the Mediterranean
- 18 It can get high every day
- 19 Spine-chilling
- 21 Yellowfin tuna variety
- 22 Denom. of South Carolina's Allen University
- 23 His "Goblet of Fire" was Amazon.com's #1 best-selling book of 2000
- 26 Language that gives us "schadenfreude"
- 28 Pissed-off look
- 29 Confesses (to)
- 33 H. in a fraternity
- 34 With "The" sitcom that made Time's 10 Best TV Series in 2001 list
- 38 Bolivian president Morales
- 39 "Pig's blood at the prom" movie
- 40 Be ready for
- 43 May-Denham difference, perhaps
- 47 Gamespy.com's PC Game of the Year, 2001

DOWN

- 1 Personal period
- 2 Dodgy sort?
- 3 Comedian Cook
- 4 Tats
- 5 Fortune magazine subj., perhaps
- 6 "Up" actor Eli
- 7 More wintry
- 8 Sweetums
- 9 San __, CA (Hearst Castle locale)
- 10 Palindromic Oklahoma city
- 11 Be sympathetic with
- 12 How sugar is sometimes served
- 13 Elevator alternative

- 18 Men-only
- 20 Numerical Internet addresses: abbr.
- 23 Kate Hudson's mom Goldie
- 24 Years, to Nero
- 25 [snicker]
- 27 Angel in Mormon history
- 30 "Hey, wait a _!"
- 31 "Kill Bill" star Thurman
- 32 Course goal
- 34 Belize's capital
- 35 She sings "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina"
- 36 Ending for demo or Dixie
- 37 "Ah, whatever" follower
- 40 House Speaker Nancy
- 41 Greek god with a lyre, to the French
- 42 Grip, once battled by Jesse Helms
- 44 Showed up on (the cover of)
- 45 Defends one's side
- 46 Current Palm products
- 48 Like Santa's helpers
- 49 Oil company that merged with BP
- 50 Played on TV Land
- 54 " _ fan tulle"
- 56 Folk rocker Delfinco
- 58 CSI sample
- 59 U.S. consumer protection agcy.

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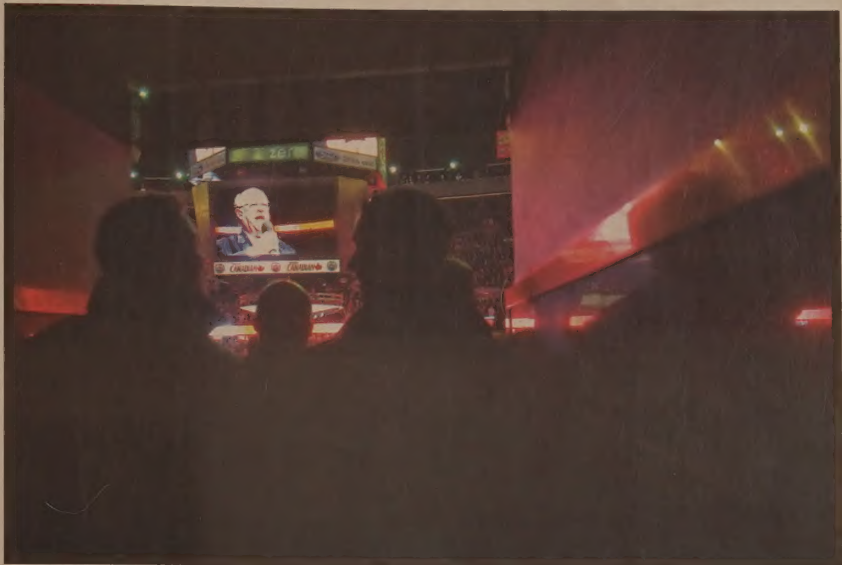
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Fans listen at Rexall Place as Paul Lorieau sings the national anthem prior to an Edmonton Oilers hockey game.
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see magazine's ten-day forecast of events in edmonton

sunday

monday

tuesday

wednesday

thursday

friday

saturday



Mostly Water Theatre Christmas Variety Show, Romy Theatre, Dec. 19

DECEMBER 13

event | **FESTIVE VEGAN & VEGETARIAN POTLUCK** See to it that your brownies aren't "special" Halloweening hippies on ice could be catastrophic. Riverview Community Hall, 5:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 14

film | **DISNEY'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL** Disney takes a crack at Dickens' classic tale of Ebenezer Scrooge. Except this time around, it's in 3D, and you're able to see every quivering nose hair on Scrooge's face.

DECEMBER 15

comedy | **PAUL BROWN & FRIENDS** Uncle Fester's cross doppelganger will be heading up The Comic Strip, 8 p.m.

DECEMBER 16

theatre | **BRIDGET RYAN'S BIG OL' CHRISTMAS CABARET** If the title didn't clarify it for you, join Mr. Ryan for a night of stories, show tunes and special guests: Catalyst Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 17

film | **INVICTUS** Clint Eastwood directs the story of Nelson Mandela and his epic venture to enlist the national rugby team whose mission was to win the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

DECEMBER 18

music | **CLASSICOX** If you want to avoid packing on the Christmas pounds, you should cut a rug with this Los Angeles based electronic music duo. New City, 9 p.m.

DECEMBER 19

comedy | **MOSTLY WATER THEATRE CHRISTMAS VARIETY SHOW** This Edmonton-based sketch comedy group takes the stage, with guest star, Mayor Stephen Mandel. Romy Theatre, 8 p.m.

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Handpainted in Portugal, this large ceramic platter will tame any turkey. 53cmx36cm

\$40



AMARYLLIS IN VASE
Large red quality Amaryllis bulb in glass vase, all dressed to bloom for your season.

\$35



GLASS ACT
Glass art clown will add a smile to even the toughest in the crowd. 23cm.

\$35



PORTUGAL PITCHER
Handpainted in cheerful colours, this pitcher is perfectly priced for flowers or juice. 1200ml.

\$15



FLORALS CUBED
Zocalo florists create seasonal floral cubes and all your holiday floral arrangements.

\$40



CATERPILLAR MUG
The story celebrates its 40th anniversary, and kids keep enjoying this one with cookies and milk.

\$12



WINE AERATOR
For the wine enthusiast, a great stainless aerator from WMF.

\$30

Look for the Bow!

Zocalo

IN LITTLE ITALY AT 10826 - 95 STREET, EDMONTON, AB
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